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ABSTRACT

Histories of Blacks, Czechs, Germans, Jews, Mexicans, and Poles are provided in this resource guide. The histories are intended as a major background resource to help instructional staff members of the 45 school systems in Education Service Center, Region II, Corpus Christi, Texas, integrate ethnic heritage studies materials into classroom instruction. The history of each group begins with a brief description of contributions, customs, and facts. A detailed narrative, which often quotes primary source materials, follows. The section on Black history contains a list of important dates. The sections on Blacks, Czechs, and Jews, in addition to describing the general histories of these groups, also discuss their histories and experiences in Texas. Also included in the guide are a calendar of ethnic holidays and a bibliography of additional resource materials. (RM)

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ETHNIC HERITAGE STUDIES

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Six AMERICAN Histories

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Preface

This publication has been developed to serve as a major resource for designing staff development activities for the instructional staff members of the forty-five school systems in Education Service Center, Region II who participate in the Ethnic Heritage Studies Laboratory. The Laboratory provides staff development to improve instructional staff members' competencies to integrate ethnic heritage studies materials into classroom instruction. Laboratory activities also involve members of community groups in developing community-based activities to promote cultural awareness and appreciation for the various ethnic groups within the communities of South Texas.

We are indebted to the members of the project's Advisory Council for their helpful suggestions and their assistance in identifying resource persons for personal interviews. We owe a debt of gratitude to the many individuals representing the Mexican, Black, Czech, Polish, German, and Jewish population groups who gave their time and assistance in developing the content for this publication.

We are indebted also to members of the Education Service Center staff who provided the support services for this project. Special acknowledgement is due Jo Ellen Heckmann and Nancy Vitale for their editorial assistance; and to Bobbie Crowe, Nancy Hill, and Peggy Stiefel for their perseverance in preparing the manuscript for printing.

Louis E. Holder, Director
Ethnic Heritage Studies Laboratory

The old man took to Michael immediately. Michael liked his grandfather because he was the only adult he knew who was close to his own size. He thought Moshe looked like the dwarfs in his book, but when he said so Dory said, "Michael, you must never say that to your grandpa. It would hurt his feelings."

Moshe tried to talk to Charles too, but the younger boy was less gregarious. He preferred to stay in his room and build block skyscrapers.

Often in the afternoon, Moshe and Michael went fishing together. Moshe had a folding chair and sometimes he took along a Yiddish newspaper. Today he sat quietly on the end of the dock, his pants rolled to his knees, his feet dangling in the cool water. Occasionally small fish would swim between his legs, rippling the water, and Moshe would smile at them.

"Are they biting?" Moshe asked Michael.

"The bait's no good."

Moshe nodded. He looked into the lake again.

"Grandpa, why are your feet purple?"

Moshe looked at the boy and then at his feet. He felt embarrassed, as though a dark secret had been discovered. He pulled his feet from the water and started putting on his socks. "Maybe when I was your age I didn't have shoes that fit," he said. "Maybe when I was twelve years old I went to work carrying heavy bags of potatoes, so maybe my feet ain't so beautiful, but so what?"

"But why Grandpa? Why didn't you have shoes? Didn't your daddy buy you shoes?"

Moshe looked at the boy standing at his side. His eyes were so large they seemed to demand an answer. Yet what could he say? How could he tell his grandson about a place on the other side of the world where people spoke a language he couldn't understand? How could he tell Michael about his boyhood on the *shtel*? What could this small boy on a dock on a lake in Madison, Wisconsin, possibly know about pogroms, about his uncle who was killed or his sister who was raped? What did poverty and prejudice have to do with him? There was nothing Moshe could say.

"He was punishing me," Moshe said at last. "Because I was a bad boy. Now, if you don't hurry home right now, I'll tell your mother you were a bad boy. Then when you're my age you'll have purple feet too."

But Michael just laughed. "You wouldn't tell, Grandpa."

Moshe smiled. "You're right," he said. "I wouldn't tell." He took a last look at the fish, picked up his chair and took the boy by the hand. Moshe stooped and unrolled his pants legs. Then he stood erect and breathed deeply. He felt giddy and held Michael's shoulder for support. He had the sudden feeling he was not alone, but that his father was holding his shoulder and his grandfather his father's, back to the beginning of time. And he was glad he had come to Wisconsin to see Benjy and meet his grandsons and form the latest link in the endless chain. He looked down and smiled again. "It's late," he said. "Let's get home for supper."

from Playing From Memory by David Milofsky. Reprinted with permission from Simon and Schuster.

Heritage separates and binds together. It is common and unique. Heritage instills pride and fulfills the human need to be a part of something continuous. It teaches and directs, provides vision and a sense of balance.

While holding a people together, heritage isolates them. The shared experiences set them apart from others and create distinct attitudes and viewpoints. Heritage molds self-image with its legacies and examples. It tells us what we were and can guide our aspirations while affording others perspective on our identity.

Heritage can be ignored and it can disappear, regardless of how deeply it is embedded. Some would applaud the loss: ethnic pride can be divisive and prejudicial. Self-esteem and dignity can be interpreted as arrogance and superiority. The pride of one group is often enhanced by shaming another.

In spite of assimilation, the preservation of ethnic identity has endured within most groups. For some, it may be a search for the comfort that traditions can provide, or the celebration of their survival. The melting pot theory has not been discarded, but some of its ingredients are proving slow to dissolve.

The nourishment of ethnic identity may become important only to certain people at particular times. Sociologists recently noted that ethnic awareness is strongest among those far removed from the accents and

customs of their immigrant forbears: the affluent and educated Americans who can afford the extravagance of ethnicity.

Although ethnic heritage studies would tend to underscore the differences between groups, a comparison of their histories emphasizes similarities. Life elicits universal responses to human needs and culture shapes our experiences, but it may be that we are alike in more ways than we are different.

The importance of commemorating our ethnic heritage is great and the nuturing of our individual roots should continue. What we are separately, however, will never surpass what we can be together. The pride we maintain in ourselves must be equal to the respect we learn for others.

Margaret Wead
Fall, 1981

January

1 - New Year. The American celebration follows the German custom of welcoming in the new year with noisemakers to scare off evil spirits.

15 - Martin Luther King's Birthday. Black.

17 - Feast of St. Anthony. Mexican. Pets are taken to church to be blessed.

February - Black History Month

2 - Groundhog Day. In Germany, where the custom originated, it was the badger who would or wouldn't see his shadow. Since there were no badgers in America, the groundhog was substituted.

6 - Mexican Constitution Day.

14 - Frederick Douglas' Birthday. Black.

24 - Mexican Flag Day.

March

2 - Texas Independence Day.

Spring - Passover. Jewish. This feast is celebrated on the 15th of Nisan, Jewish calendar. It commemorates the passing over of the angel of death sent by God to kill the first-born sons of Egyptians. In their flight out of Egypt, the Jews had no time to wait for bread to rise and so ate unleavened bread. Thus, the traditional food of this eight-day feast is *matzoh*.

- Easter. Christian. The traditions of Easter, celebrating Christ's rise from the dead, have been contributed by numerous groups. Most are symbolic of spring and rebirth. The Easter Bunny is from Germany, egg decoration is an Eastern European custom. Ham is considered the traditional food, a custom started by the English in opposition to the Jewish practice of abstaining from all pork.

July

22 - Polish National Day.

September

15 - Mexican Independence Day.

September - October

- Rosh ha-Shanah. Jewish New Year. The first day of Tishri is the start of the new year on the Jewish calendar, which includes lunar as well as solar calculations. Generally, a day ends/begins at sun-down. The Jewish calendar is 3,761 years ahead of the Gregorian, so 1981 was also 5743.

- Yom Kippur. Jewish. This, the Day of Atonement, comes ten days after Rosh ha-Shanah on the tenth of Tishri. It ends the High Holy Days observation with prayers and fasting, followed by a feast and celebration.

October

11 - Pulaski Day. Polish. In honor of General Casimir Pulaski, a Pole who served in the American Revolution and died of wounds received at the seige of Savannah.

December

16 - Las Posadas. Mexican. For nine days, this pageant re-enacts the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethleham and their search for lodging. Las Patores, an elaborate morality play, is part of the pageant.

25 - Christmas. Christian. The celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The word comes from the contraction of 'Christ's Mass;' the shortened form, 'Xmas,' incorporates the Greek letter Chi - X - which meant Christ. Christmas traditions, like those for Easter, have been borrowed and revised from old customs all over the world. The Christmas tree was first brought indoors and decorated with candles by Martin Luther in Germany in 1604. In the early 1800s, Americans instituted the custom and the first trees were sold in New York City.

In Mexico, they tell the story of a poor girl who had no gift for the Christ Child. She brought Him some plain flowers that turned red and beautiful when presented to the Infant. When Joel Poinsett was American Ambassador to Mexico, he brought the flowers to friends in the States. They called them Poinsettias.

In Czechoslovakia, Christmas is 'Vanoce,' in Mexico, 'Navidad,' and in Poland, 'Boze Narodzenie.'

28 - All Fool's Day. Mexican. Anything borrowed on this day doesn't have to be returned.

(date varies) - Hanukkah. Jewish. Over 2,000 years ago, Syrian forces took Jerusalem and desecrated the temple. Soon after, Jewish forces routed the Syrians. Within the temple, the oil supply for the lamps was nearly gone, but God granted a miracle and the supply lasted for eight days, long enough to rededicate the temple and celebrate the victory. Hanukkah, the Festival of Light, is on the 25th of Kislev and commemorates the victory. The *menorah*, a candleabra with nine branches, is used and a candle is lit each night. By the 2nd of Tevet, all nine are lit. One of the legends of Hanukkah connects it to the Winter solstice and the kindling of fire. The custom of giving gifts, especially to children and students, signifies the spreading of joy and light.

from The Ethnic Almanac

Black: Words attributed to blacks in general are usually from particular countries in Africa. For example, *banana* is a West African word, while *gumbo* is from the Angolan *ngombo*. In Gullah, *nyami* means to eat; we changed the meaning and the word to 'yam.' Our 'banjo' was introduced by the Kimbundu, who called it *mbanya*. The Wolof had the word *dzug* for misbehaving and used it when referring to bars and brothels. In America, the pronunciation was altered and eventually any place that had music was called a 'juke joint.'

The foods identified as black, or 'soul food' are still more common in the South than the North. Like Mexican foods, they reflect the poverty the group was once forced to endure: they ate what no one else considered good. Thus, fat back was put in beans to add pork flavor when no meat could be afforded. It is ironic that the foods once served because they were cheap and filling are now considered 'in' by some people who will pay well to eat what was once called 'slave food.'

Diet can also be affected by genetic differences such as the lactose intolerance prevalent among most groups. In some people, the lactose enzyme matures after infancy, allowing the digestion of cow's milk. Among certain groups, Jews, blacks, Middle Easterners, Australian Aborigines, American Indians and most Asians, the enzyme does not mature and cow's milk, as well as its products, causes nausea. Sensitivity varies, of course, within groups and by individuals, and the generations of intermarriage have lessened the intolerance in some groups. Still, 70% of the blacks, Indians and Jews in the United States and 80% of the Middle Easterners and Asians show definite reactions to milk and milk products.

- The original environment of a racial or ethnic group can also dictate physical reactions. For example, black Americans are twice as prone to high blood pressure than any other group. Doctors believe this is due to a racial characteristic that evolved to enable them to tolerate the excessive heat in Africa. Generally, blacks retain

more salt which would be lost through perspiration. Although they are in the heat no more than anyone else, their bodies have not yet adapted to modern conditions and instances of hypertension remain high.

from The Ethnic Almanac

1492 -- Christopher Columbus arrives. On board one ship was Pedro Alonso Nino, a free black.

1619 -- First blacks sold as slaves in Jamestown, Virginia.

1773 -- The first book of poems written by slave Phillis Wheatley is published.

1781 -- Slave Quork Walker won his freedom by arguing in court that Massachusetts' state constitution declared: "all men are born free and equal."

1790 -- The United States census reported that there were 697,681 slaves and 59,538 free blacks in the country. Virginia had the largest slave population -- 304,000.

1808 -- On January 1, the importation of slaves was made illegal. Traffic continued illegally.

1817 -- The American Colonization Society decided that the solution to the slave problem was to send all Africans home to Africa. About 12,000 blacks made it to a settlement in Liberia but most felt no tie with the 'homeland;' the cultural heritage had not been reinforced.

1831 -- The last slave revolt before the Civil War led by Nat Turner resulted in the deaths of 70 whites and 55 blacks, including Turner.

1857 -- The Dred Scott Decision. In Missouri, a court ruled that slave Scott, being property, could not sue for freedom; his rights as a citizen were denied. Eventually, a man bought him and set him free.

1859 -- The raid on Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. White Abolitionist John Brown, intending to establish a republic in the Appalacians and declare war on the South, raided the Arsenal with 5 blacks and 16 whites. Brown was captured and hanged.

1863 -- Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Lincoln freed slaves residing in the states fighting against the Union, not all states. Official word did not reach Texas until June 19, the date that is still celebrated as 'June'teenth.'

1873 -- John Henry, a construction worker on the Big Bend Tunnel in Virginia, dies.

1882 -- 'Separate but equal' becomes law with the enactment of the 'Jim Crow' railroad car laws in Tennessee.

1893 -- Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, a black physician, performed the first successful heart operation; in Chicago.

1895 -- The first black to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard, W. E. B. DuBois, graduated.

1896 -- Ragtime music is born in the Midwest.

-- Plessy vs Ferguson. The U.S. Supreme Court upholds the 'separate but equal' ruling and applies it to all public facilities, including schools.

1909 -- The North Pole is discovered by Commander Perry's black assistant, Matthew Henson.

-- The National Negro Committee, later to be called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is founded.

1931 -- The Scottsboro Boys case established the right of blacks to serve on juries; the defendants, however, were found guilty. Years later, they were released and vindicated.

1936 -- Jesse Owens won 4 gold medals in track at the Olympics held in Berlin.

1940 -- The first black to win an Academy Award is Hattie McDaniel for her role as Mammy in Gone With the Wind.

1947 -- Jackie Robinson becomes the first black to play National League baseball.

1952 -- For the first time in 71 years, there were no reported lynchings in America.

1953 -- Brown vs. Topeka. The Supreme Court reversed the 'separate but equal' ruling and ordered the integration of all public facilities.

1955 -- Rosa Parks rode the bus in Atlanta, and refused to give her seat to a white man. She was arrested. The incident is considered the beginning of the civil rights movement.

1960 -- The first 'sit-in,' at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Charlotte, North Carolina, to protest the policy of serving blacks only if they remained standing.

1964 -- President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act which prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex, race, or religion.

1979 -- Former slave Charlie Smith, age 137, died.

from The Ethnic Almanac

Because their history is one of inflicted immigration, slavery and control, it is difficult to trace American blacks to any specific location in Africa. In addition, because their lives were so totally changed by capture and enslavement, their African traditions and languages were severely altered within one generation. The culture that did evolve is uniquely theirs and uniquely American.

In the early years of North American settlement, labor was done by indentured servants, usually white. In the early 1600s, the importation of blacks from Africa began.

> *The first Afro-Americans known to have been imported into English North America were the famed score of 'negars' brought by a Dutch ship to Virginia in 1619. The nameless Dutch privateer had seized a Spanish vessel whose cargo included Antonio, Isabella, Pedro and seventeen other Africans bound for slavery in the Spanish West Indies. Six years later, Antonio and Isabella gave birth to a son, the first Afro-American born in the United States, and christened him William Tucker after a local planter.*
>
> *There is evidence that, until the 1660s, the black immigrants enjoyed a status not unlike that of white indentured servants. The exact process by which this 'temporary' slavery became hereditary, the badge of which was dark skin, is still unclear. (1)*

Many historians believe that use of black labor was a decision based on economics. Indentured servants bought their freedom and their numbers decreased as the social and economic situations in Europe improved, easing

the need to emigrate. "...the planters had to find another source of permanent, dependable labor who would increase, not eat into, their profits." (2)

When the Europeans began the slave trade, they did not keep accurate records and failed to note any substantial differences between the peoples they captured. Because of political conditions, most slavers concentrated their activities in the present-day countries of Senegal, Angola, Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia and Sierra Leone. A few raided the east coast country of Mozambique. In America, slave buyers began gradually to detect differences in temperament and stamina and started requesting slaves from particular regions: Angola, Senegal and Gambia.

Historians and anthropologists have noted that many of the African societies from which America's slaves came also practiced slavery.

> *But there is slavery and there is slavery. Modern historians like Stanley Elkins pointed out the uniqueness of the system of slavery that pertained in parts of the West Indies and North America. First of all, it was the only mass slavery ever created and maintained as a purely capitalistic enterprise: The large-scale cultivation of agricultural staples like sugar and cotton was built on slavery - indeed, could not have existed without it. Most slave societies have used their bondsmen to aid and abet a functioning system, usually as a luxury for the wealthy, but not a foundation for creating wealth for an entire class and region. (3)*

In addition, in most slave societies there are specific rights afforded them; they are considered people, albeit low class. In the United States, however, they were classified as chattel, property, and had no rights as human beings.

> *An African tribal leader no doubt assumed he was selling his brethern into a system whose workings were familiar to him; an existence where a slave or his offspring well might marry*

into, or be named an heir of, the family that held him. (4)

This was not the system that existed in America.

The early years of slavery in America did not include stringent codes and laws. Primitive conditions required that all work together - landowner, black slave and white indentured servants. Because of their reliance on their slaves, owners could not afford to mistreat them to any great extent; they could not afford to lose the help. As economic conditions bettered, however, laws were passed to alleviate racist fears and to control the intermingling of the races. In the 1660s, laws were passed in Virginia and Maryland making the words "slave" and "black" synonymous and establishing the harsh controls associated with the institution of slavery.

> *...an African was a slave for life, the child of a slave mother was a slave, and marriage or sexual relations between white and black were illegal. These were the judicial bases of the Slave Codes eventually drawn up by every colony and reconstituted by the slave states after the American Revolution. Slaves were personal property, or chattel, literally a possession. A slave, for instance, could be 'rented' to a neighbor for cash, much as if he were a wheelbarrow or wagon. In most states, if a white man was convicted of raping a black slavewoman, his crime was <u>trespass</u>; of course if she were his own slave, her rape was no crime at all. (5)*

Slaves were needed to work the lands; it was purely and strongly an economic issue. Plantation owners and farmers had tried using Indian labor but efforts had failed: Indians knew the land and could easily escape and survive alone. Not only were blacks unfamiliar with the environment, their harsh life in Africa may have helped instill a certain stoicism that allowed them to survive in spite of suffering. This attitude was never understood by Europeans or Americans who interpreted it as docile acceptance.

Modern theories suggest that the Africans adjusted more easily because of their complex social structures and culture. They were initially more agricultural than the Indians and this may have helped them make the transition to the planter society.

African societies differed in philosophy and life style, but were basically tribal, at least in origin. Therefore, the individual was less important than the group and the survival of the clan mattered more than one's own life. The size of the group was important and growth mandatory. Since women often outnumbered the men, due to hunting accidents, polygamy was encouraged.

Children were raised by the 'extended family' - aunts, uncles, grandparents - and the concepts of kinship and descendency were learned at an early age.

The separation forced on blacks by slavery was devastating. The Africans had an unsophisticated world view since few had ever ventured far from their village. Considering their limited experiences with those not of their clan and the close family ties, the fact that the majority did survive - unlike the suicide-prone Biafrans - underscores their remarkable endurance.

Once settled on American plantations, the blacks were encouraged to acculturate. Owners probably feared their alien, tribal roots and wanted them to be less threatening. As a result, owners eventually allowed missionaries to Christianize the slaves, although permission was denied at first from fear of manumission.

Initially, blacks fought acculturation by clinging to certain

traditional concepts such as the measurements of time and distance. Like the American Indians, blacks had no artificial ways of measuring, i.e., no clocks or miles. Distance was measured by how long it took to arrive at a given location and might be indicated by the positions of the sun or moon. It could be an extremely precise and accurate system or a relative one - events began when everyone arrived, not at a particular moment. This attitude tended to irritate the 'time-is-money' beliefs of white owners who decided that the blacks were innately lazy.

Among themselves, blacks retained ethnic identities since they understood and respected the various social distinctions that members of different tribes honored.

Anytime there is a meeting of cultures, regardless of the role each assumes, acculturation occurs on both sides. The plantation owners gained knowledge from their black slaves, particularly in the areas of cattle raising and the growing of rice. The blacks brought a great deal of knowledge from Africa and while the environments were dissimilar, their experience with various aspects of agriculture was more extensive than that of American planters.

It is difficult to pinpoint which African traditions endured or were adapted to fit into the planter society. It appears that certain African work patterns did survive because of the agricultural bent of both experiences. In Africa, the role of women centered around maintaining the home - cooking, sewing, etc. Women also worked the fields but only insofar as such labor did not interfere with child care. As was typical of agrarian societies, the women tended gardens, milked cows, churned butter and did

the weaving and spinning. Many of these duties translated to the southern plantations but field work superseded them all in importance.

> *Under slavery, black women had to leave their new-born children under the care of a 'granny' during the day. And they often relinquished control of the family garden to men, largely as a result of spinning and weaving duties that consumed so many evening and winter hours. Slave men followed the traditions of their forefathers in their fishing, hunting, woodworking and basket weaving activities.*
>
> *West Africans in general brought with them competencies and knowledge that slaveowners readily exploited. Certain tribes were familiar with rice, cotton and indigo cultivation. Many black women had had experience spinning thread, weaving cloth, and sewing clothes. Moreover, slaves often used techniques and tools handed down from their ancestors -- in the method of planting, hoeing, and pounding rice, for example. Whites frequently commented on the ability of slave women to balance heavy and unwieldly loads on their heads, an African trait. (6)*

In some locales, blacks interacted with Indians and the two groups found they had things in common. Their tribal backgrounds provided them with similar philosophies, clan structure and kinship ties. From the Indians, blacks learned to make medicine from local plants and how to use the land to survive. Slave owners saw the danger in this association and encouraged trouble between the groups by rewarding Indians who returned runaway slaves and by conscripting blacks to fight insurrections.

From the beginning, there had been free blacks but their numbers were small and situations grim, generally. There were 488,000 free blacks nationwide in 1860, most of whom lived in northern cities. (7) Free blacks answered to no master and were allowed to own property. In fact, a few had successful businesses and, ironically, owned slaves.

In the South, free blacks were considered a threat - slave owners

feared they would lead revolutions - but a few managed to advance even there.

> *...one of the most fascinating free Negroes in the South was William Tiler Johnson of Natchez, Mississippi, whose career has become known from a diary he kept from 1835 until his murder by another free Negro in 1851. Like the other 3,660 free blacks who owned slaves as of 1830, Johnson was no stranger to capitalism. He used his $15-dollar-a-day profits from a barbering parlor to amass an estate worth $25,000. He then bought and rented out two stores, made loans to whites, and purchased a farm -- christened Hardscrabble -- where he hunted with his dogs. For amusement, he attended the theater, where he sat in the colored gallery, and the races. Dining or drinking with whites was out of the question but he was on the best of terms with all the prominent leaders of the community. Like many of the tiny minority of blacks who achieved material success and prestige in America, he found it difficult to relate to blacks beneath him -- he confessed that he could not bring himself to attend 'darky dances and parties.' (8)*

By the antebellum period of the early Nineteenth Century, slavery had created an economic stability. Codes against blacks were strengthened and severe punishments inflicted for attempts at running away. The Underground Railroad enabled many blacks to get to the North and to Canada, but far more were thwarted in their attempts to escape, especially those from small plantations. Although one usually thinks of large plantations with hundreds of slaves working the house and fields, the average farmer had only a few slaves and often they were worth more than the land they worked. Many planters saw them as an investment but their ability to work was of high importance. It is certain that not all planters mistreated their slaves. Some, like Thomas Jefferson, were appalled by the system but simultaneously dependent upon it. The issue was not necessarily brutality but the fact that one human could literally own another.

Some women understood that their owner's economic self-interest affected even the most intimate family ties. Of the pregnant bondswomen on her husband's expansive Buter's Island (Georgia) rice plantation, Fanny Kimble observed, 'they have all of them a most distinct and perfect knowledge of their value to their owners as property,' and she recoiled at their obsequious profession obviously intended to delight her: 'Missus, tho' we no able to work, we make little niggers for Massa.' (9)

The abolitionists understood the economic necessity of labor, but believed blacks should be hired. Southerners tended to see their antagonists as "Englishmen whose forebears shipped slaves, and New Englanders whose ancestors exterminated Indians with righteous glee and mercilessly flogged religious dissenters, (who) were self-righteous in their growing humanitarian objections to practices which, once countenanced in their regions, were no longer." (10) The planters were as rigid and complex as the abolitionists and prone to defined class systems and social orders.

There were striking contradictions and ambiguities in the planters' character: noblesse oblige and incredible brutality, paternalism and unrestrained exploitation, grace and charm and boorish manners, lavish hospitality and the quick-tempered anger that made dueling endemic, and a chilvaric code that placed white women on a pedestal yet allowed the prostitution of black females. (11)

Recalling Mammy and Prissy, the loyal servants of Gone with the Wind, the reality of slavery for most twentieth century Americans becomes confused with the protective, familial clan that defensive slave owners described and claimed to nurture. The institution of slavery was very rarely benevolent; typically, it was exceedingly cruel. Slaves arose at four in the morning, dressed in coarse clothing made "for slaves only" and worked in the fields fourteen hours a day.

In the cotton belt they plowed fields; dropped seed; and hoed, picked, ginned, sorted and moted cotton. On farms in Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee, women hoed tobacco; laid worm fences; and threshed, raked and bound wheat... During the winter they performed a myriad of tasks necessary on nineteenth-century farms of all kinds: repairing roads, pitching hay, burning brush, and setting up post and rail fences. (12)

While their parents worked the fields, children were set to tasks for the white owners doing household and farmyard chores: cleaning, washing, ironing, babysitting and tending the chickens and cows. As they grew, children's labor was divided by sex. Boys assisted their masters; girls their mistresses.

Mary Woodward, only eleven in 1865, was taught to comb her mistress' hair, lace her corset, and arrange her hoop skirts. At the end of the toilet Mary was supposed to say, 'You is served, mistress.' Recalled the former slave, 'Her lak them little words at de last.' (13)

If their work was not performed in an acceptable manner, slaves were punished by the owner or overseer. Because of their economic value, they were not usually beaten to death, unless they were to serve as an example to others. Maiming, disfigurement and crippling injuries, however, were not uncommon. Many whites believed that the slaves were incapable of understanding anything less than a beating; others were simply sadistic: "A certain method for whipping pregnant slaves was used throughout the South -- 'they were made to lie face down in a specially dug depression in the ground.'" (14)

Because some slaves were able to defend themselves, they would be left alone, regardless of their transgression; the fear of retaliation was strong. Often, weaker slaves would be substituted even though innocent of

any misconduct. This practice insured a high degree of control over the slaves and the constant threat increased productivity. It also created a cohesion within the slave community. They helped each other avoid punishment by feigning ignorance or by assisting weaker members in producing their required quotas. (15)

In spite of the arduous work done by slaves, they did not eat well. "The standard weekly ration for most slaves was 3.5 to 4.0 pounds of salt pork and a peck of corn for the young male adult, with women, children and older adults receiving smaller portions." (16) The inadequate diet and lack of necessary vitamins and nutrients resulted in disease and high infant mortality rate. The physical and emotional stress placed on slaves created a life expectancy rate of 32.6 years for males and 33.6 for females. (17)

Although pregnancy was encouraged by the slave owner - any child born of a woman he owned was automatically his property - and eugenics was practiced by some owners, a new mother was rarely allowed much time away from the fields. The strenuous work soon after delivery often resulted in permanent injury, even death.

In spite of the dismal conditions, the black family of the antebellum era was unified and usually incorporated the extended family concept into the slave society. Records indicate that most children lived in two-parent households and that "fewer than one in four families were without a male parent;" the "female family heads were mostly age 40 or older, suggesting that many were widows." (18)

Maintaining the family may have also served to furnish a sense of order in the slaves' harsh lives. By extension, the roles assumed by

husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, may have "provided a weapon for joint resistance to dehumanization." (19)

In the 1840s, the cotton industry began spreading throughout the South, to Texas, Louisiana and Alabama, as agriculture began declining in the East. Although smuggling continued slave trading had officially ended in 1809, and the worth of those already here increased. (20) When a planter died or went bankrupt, his slaves were sold and transported to other regions. This had a devastating effect on the slave family and further destroyed the self-image of the father. Often on the plantation, a male earned a position of authority and responsibility, recognized by the owner in order to maintain discipline. The slaves were sometimes able to assert themselves in certain ways and this enabled them to feel that they were protecting and providing for their families. When the economic attention shifted and these slaves were forced to migrate, the men lost their hard-earned standing within the community. In addition, the migration broke families up as children, mothers and fathers were sold to different planters.

Even though families were separated, family names were remembered and passed on. Kinship, although difficult to reinforce under the circumstances, remained an important part of the culture. Children whose parents had died or been sold were absorbed into the community and orphans were rare. It is believed that the custom, common throughout the South, of calling unrelated elders "aunt" and "uncle" originated within the slave culture.

Plantation life had allowed other cultural elements to evolve: religion, music and folk stories were the strongest. With the migration, many of these elements became dispersed throughout the South and Southwest and

were adapted to the different regions. The people had only these things to sustain them. Their reputation for acceptance increased, while in reality the blacks had no choice but to accept what they had to and change what they could. Until emancipation, they had virtually no opportunity to change their situation.

The total oppression enforced by slavery worked in insidious ways to create severe problems within the society. Men could offer no resistance, voice no protest as their wives were raped and/or forced into sexual relationships with their white masters. The women, threatened with the whip or having their husbands and children sold away from them, were allowed no alternative to acquiescence. The helplessness that slaves felt, the frustration in having no recourse to such treatment, was often vented inward to the family or group since they could not lash out against their oppressors. Rendered powerless by a person or group they could not oppose, the victims often turned on the weaker members of their own group. It was not a conscious choice but a human reaction to the impotence caused by oppression. The traditional role for men, that of protector and provider, was more vulnerable to oppression because that role was eliminated or, at least, severely reduced in importance. Women, however, were usually allowed to continue in their traditional roles to a greater extent and, therefore, withstood certain aspects of tyranny. At the same time, women often became the victims of the mens' rage and frustration because they were seen as weaker and, in the case of rape, men often felt the woman bore "ultimate responsibility for his humiliation." (21) All severely oppressed groups have suffered this ordeal; black slaves were no exception. The oppression that permeated

every part of slave life left deep scars in the culture that some historians believe have not yet healed.

Because physical revolt was ultimately pointless, psychological revolt was used as a form of escape. This could mean suicide or self-mutilation, which rendered a slave unable to work, "malingering..., and calculated stupidity or incompetence..." (22) Childlike naivete was cleverly used to manipulate a master into believing his slaves incapable of learning anything or working against him. This was not the case, but such behavior came to condition blacks to specific responses to whites and conditioned whites to expect only certain abilities from blacks.

During the Civil War, the possibility of freedom began to have an effect on the attitudes of slaves. Freedom had always been their dream - blacks fought in the American Revolution for promises of liberty, but the pledges were usually revoked and their service ignored. Slaves who escaped in the confusion of the war and free blacks fought for the Union; blacks were also conscripted into the Confederate Army.

When emancipation finally came, it caused problems. To older people who had always been slaves, the prospect of freedom was at once frightening and exciting. In their old age, they were sometimes granted privileges as 'family retainers.' Freedom meant they would have to start over in a new place. For people of advanced age, such a situation was often overwhelming. As a result, there were some slaves who stayed on with their masters. For a few, living conditions improved and they received salaries for their work. They lived out their lives knowing they were free to be where they chose to be.

There were those who wanted to leave but couldn't, as in the case of Rosaline Rogers, the mother of fourteen children: "I was given my choice of staying on the same plantation, working on shares, or taking my family away, letting them out (to work in return) for their food and clothes. I decided to stay on that way; I could have my children with me." (23)

In spite of the uncertainties of life off the plantation, most blacks left as soon as they could. "In every region that Federal forces moved through in the last three years of the war, vast numbers of slaves bespoke their sentiments toward slavery with their feet: they simply walked off, to a precarious future as campfollowers in the train of promised freedom." (24) Many fled north, to the protection of the Union Army refugee camps where they encountered situations as bad as what they had left. Still, they endured and had the reality of freedom to sustain them. The importance of that is best seen in the incident of a woman from Louisiana who carried her dead baby - "shot by her pursuing master" - to a Union camp "to be buried, as she said, free." (25)

Most freed blacks set out on their own to find family members and build a new life. In Texas, groups banded together and established black towns. Examples are Kendleton, in Fort Bend County, settled in 1869 and Board House, founded in 1866. (26) Across the country, the first concern of freed blacks was obtaining land and working it independently. The federal government allocated some conquered lands to former slaves; other land commissions and homestead acts assisted in similar endeavors. In some cases, the blacks succeeded; in others, they ended up in positions of servitude akin to slavery. Obstensibly 'hired' to work, they were often not paid at

all or trapped into buying supplies from bosses at prices so exorbitant they were in continuous debt. (27) Children were put to work at young ages to add to the family income, their chances for education eliminated.

The only work experience that blacks had was in planting, farming and cultivating. The North had become more industrialized during the Civil War and most blacks were not prepared for factory jobs. The South, although devastated, was the area that provided the most opportunity for work and so most blacks remained in that region. The Southern white land owners had been economically wiped out by the war; the small farmers, especially, were hard hit and barely able to survive, much less hire help. The economic situation immediately after the war limited the amount of work available and the bitterness that many Southerners felt interfered with their ability to work with blacks. Southern pride was strong; the people had been convinced their cause was just and the loss of the war delivered serious psychological damage. Added to that was the total destruction of homes, farms and crops. The Yankees had been the enemy but they were gone.

> *The bloodbath of war always spills over onto innocent civilian populations. But in this case racial animosities exacerbated the bitterness felt by all segments of the Confederate population. Black people, the source of the white man's humiliation, were naturally the target of his rage. (28)*

Some whites were incapable of seeing blacks as free human beings, regardless of the laws passed. Where before blacks had been an economic asset, they became suddenly a threat. For many, these years were worse than those spent in slavery. Blacks were on their own in an increasingly hostile society they had never dealt with before.

As land owners began rebuilding their farms in the late 1860s, they acknowledged the need for laborers. The blacks needed work but realized the possibility of slipping back into a bondage system. Gradually, sharecropping emerged as the means by which both groups could benefit.

With the land owner, blacks shared the income from the crop and were responsible for working their own parcels, independent of any overseer. Often the entire family would be involved in some aspect of planting, harvesting or picking, but for the first time, the black woman was allowed to stay home and tend to the household and children. This caused resentment among whites who saw them as "lazy", staying "out of the fields, doing nothing", while their husbands worked to "support them in idleness." (29) The fact that running a household while being supported by their husbands had been the lot of white women for generations was ignored. Questions about the masculinity of a man who would allow his wife to dominate him circulated about black men without any thought of comparison to the white male. (30)

The opportunity for education presented itself and adults as well as children attended school.

> *The decision to send a child to school usually entailed considerable financial sacrifice, but it meant that youngsters would not grow up to be, in the words of one woman, 'like de mammy, a unknowledge (sic) person.' Yet schooling could estrange children from their parents, and cause them to resist the way of life they were destined to follow, regardless of their educational attainments. A mother expressed a mixture of pride and apprenhension when she said of her literate daughter, 'She knows so much, an' I don't know nothing.' (31)*

Parents and grandparents learned to read from their children or by attending classes themselves. There was a strong belief in education as a

means of getting ahead and as a way of protecting one's self and family against fraud. The schooling provided blacks, however, was often minimal. Economics required the help of children in the fields and some people saw no need to provide any advanced education to blacks: "They would make more desirable citizens if they would stop about the seventh grade." (32)

Assuming that the situation would be better there, many blacks moved to the North. There, they found that their 'liberators' were as reluctant as Southerners to afford them any rights. The influx of blacks willing to work for any wages, threatened the jobs of many whites and animosity grew. Blacks were perceived as second-class citizens and were barred from jobs, schools, housing and facilities by a myriad of newly-enacted state laws. They were free only in a certain sense of the word. By the turn of the century, most blacks were embedded in poverty, both financial and spiritual, and freedom was more a state of mind than a reality.

The first black to arrive in what is now Texas was also the first known black to arrive in America. Esteban, a Moorish slave, was one of the survivors of the Narvaez Expedition which wrecked off the coast of Galveston in 1528. With his master, Dorantes, and two other Spaniards, Castillo and Cabeza de Vaca, Esteban traveled throughout the Southwest for eight years.

At first, the Europeans were slaves of the Karankawa who considered them weak. Also, the Indians saw them eating their dead companions after the shipwreck. The Indians practiced a ritualistic cannabalism, but eating human flesh for survival was considered by them to be a contemptuous act.

The group led a difficult existence among the Indians whom they came to respect for their stamina and endurance. According to legend, the Europeans were allowed to leave after they saved the life of a Karankawa leader's son. Supposedly, their reputation for healing preceded them and they were welcomed into the camps of other tribes throughout the region. In addition, Esteban was adept at languages and quickly learned to communicate with the many tribes they met.

Eventually, the group made it to Mexico City where Esteban was sold to Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza. In 1539, Esteban guided an expedition led by Fray Marcos de Niza in a search for Cibolo and the seven cities of gold. (It has been said that the word 'cibolo' means buffalo in one of the Indian

languages. Whether this is an example of the relativity of what is deemed wealth by a culture, or the result of a mistranslation is unknown.)

Esteban's success with various Indian tribes apparently made him less cautious than he should have been. Acting alone he entered a Zuni pueblo after he had been warned not to and was killed.

During the Spanish conquest of the Southwest, blacks were frequently in the troops; in 1791, twenty-four per cent of the population of Texas was black. There were also slaves - about one hundred in 1793 - but it is not known whether they were black, white or Indian. Free blacks, under Spanish rule, could work and live as they chose, although they were barred from holding government positions. In truth, few Spaniards were allowed in office; it was a position of privilege. There was intermarriage with Spaniards and Indians and census records of the mid-1790s show the inconsistency of race designation: the same man is listed as Spanish in 1790, Mulatto in 1792 and Indian in 1793.

The Spanish, and later the Mexicans, saw a distinction between slavery and peonage, opposing the former in theory and depending upon the latter. When Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821, the new constitution emphasized the 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' of French and to some extent, American politics. Gradually, laws against slavery were passed and enforced. Some historians point out that enforcement often was due more to economics than any sincere effort to eradicate the practice; slavery was ignored when convenient but prosecuted when necessary.

When Stephen Austin established his colony of Anglo-Americans in Mexican Texas, the issue of slavery created problems: "It (slavery) was a

subject that refused to stay settled, and first and last, probably caused Austin more anxiety during the early years of the colony than any other." (33)

Confusion over slavery and the Mexican attitude toward it did cut down on the number of white colonists with slaves arriving in Texas from the United States. However, in 1836, the year Texas declared independence, there were approximately 30,000 Anglos, 4,000 Mexicans and 5,000 black slaves in all of Texas. Eleven years later, there were 100,000 whites with 40,000 slaves, and in 1850, there were 397 free blacks, 58,161 slaves and 154,034 whites. Most slaves arrived with planter owners from the South. "These blacks were not spread evenly throughout the settled portions of the state. They were confined almost entirely to the eastern plantations; on the western frontier, and south of the Guadalupe River, slaves existed only rarely, and then as house or body servants." (34)

The army of General Zachary Taylor marched into Corpus Christi in 1845, and the officers brought their slaves. These were probably the first blacks since Esteban to arrive in South Texas. The proximity to Mexico and inducements from Mexicans caused many slaves to run for freedom. About nine slaves, along with thirty-seven soldiers, escaped during the army's march to the Rio Grande.

The Nueces County census shows forty-seven slaves in 1850, and 216 in 1860; each census lists one free black. Prior to experiments with growing cotton, slaves were mostly personal servants of wealthy citizens. As the cotton industry began to build, field laborers were needed and a newspaper article of 1859 noted: "One of our largest planters has gone to South Carolina after a large additional force of Negroes to assist in gathering his

crop in his future operations." (35)

Five months later, in March of 1860, another newspaper announced "The two Negroes belonging to Colonel H.P. Bee were taken near Rio Grande City, about a week after their escape, by some Mexicans, and are now on their way to this place...These Negroes had been recently brought to Corpus Christi from South Carolina, and it seems strange that they should attempt to make their way to Mexico, being entirely ignorant of the geography of this country." (36)

Quite often, Mexicans would help the blacks to escape, in keeping with their own love of freedom. Owners, however, paid well for the recapture of slaves and as times became more trying economically, the rewards took on importance if a family was to survive.

In spite of the odds, blacks continued to run away from slavery. It is not known how many succeeded, but the plight of two that did not was recorded by an ex-slave in 1929:

> *Two Negroes from Missouri got to "the sands" near Brownsville, but they got turned around and their feet were worn out and they were without water, so they came back to Banquete where they were caught and an iron chain was put around their neck like wild animals. We were on the ranch and saw them. (37)*

There were also instances of freedom being refused, as is seen in this situation:

> *X at Corpus Christi owned his half-brother. The mulatto brother was offered a majority by General Mejia at $80 a month but he would not accept. X said to him, "You are as free as I am." The slave said, "Yes, I know it and that is why I am not going to Mexico." He frequently was taken to Mexico by X but he always came back. He wasn't bitter about the relationship. (38)*

While black slaves fled to Mexico, peons from there escaped to the United States. Peons were not actually owned by their masters - freedom was, in theory, attainable through working off their debt - but the system was equated to slavery by North Americans who saw the reality of the system, not the theory. The Mexican government complained about the loss of these workers since it was incurring a hardship on the master-creditor. In twenty-five years, from 1848 to 1873, it was estimated that over 2,800 servants from half the towns in Coahuila and Nuevo Leon escaped to Texas. Their families, which went with them or joined them later, added another 2,500. Mexico estimated the unpaid debts of these peons at $400,000. Although Mexicans argued for the return of the people, they had as much success as the North Americans did in getting slaves returned.

The peons were viewed as a threat to slave owners in Texas. A delegate to the Texas convention of 1845 pointed out, "Notice how often the peons of the west have come in and enticed our negroes away." (39) The Mexican government promoted the idea that runaway peons were, in fact, criminals who would commit depredations in the United States. The existing tension between North Americans and Mexicans in South Texas was exacerbated by the problem of runaway slaves and peons and led to numerous skirmishes in the region. Texas troops crossed the border at Piedras Negras in 1855, demanding the return of fugitive slaves. They were defeated by Mexican troops but burned the city before departing. A foray was planned in early 1860 from Rio Grande City by Captain E.R. Hord who wrote to the Corpus Christi newspaper: "in a few days it is expected that about 500 of us will cross over into Mexico and demand Cortina of the authorities, as well as

all the negroes." (40) There is no record of the actual accomplishment of this mission: Texas Rangers crossed the border a few weeks later, but no evidence at all connects the letter to the Rangers' actions.

Due to problems retaining their "property", white slave owners in South Texas began to look elsewhere for help:

> *The frequent* ***escape of slaves*** *from the American side of the Rio Grande into Mexico, and the folly of any attempt to recapture them - although you often meet your own property in Matamoros - has been one of the excitants of bad feeling between the citizens of Mexico and those on the frontier; consequently, all the* ***household drudgery and menial services*** *are performed* ***by Mexican servants.*** *(41)*

For years, Mexicans and blacks had helped each other in their common search for freedom; upon emancipation, the blacks in South Texas were suddenly pitted against the Mexicans to compete for the few jobs open to them. This economic factor combined with racial and cultural differences tended to divide the groups and diffuse the impact they might have held collectively against the discrimination they faced over the next century.

The experiences of blacks in South Texas since the Civil War are exemplified best by the life of Dr. H.J. Williams and his family. His maternal grandparents were slaves belonging to Mifflin Kenedy. It is not known where they were born or even if Kenedy was their original owner. Williams thinks they may have come from Virginia, but there is no way of ever being certain. His grandfather's name was Henry Reed and he was foreman on Kenedy's ranch. He was killed in a hunting accident - a gun was dropped and discharged. His grandmother lived until Williams was a baby, but he was never able to ask her about her life. Speaking of differences between

slavery and the life his parents knew, Williams said, "What they were born into was perhaps not too much better than what they came out of, except they had the freedom to leave, to go, to come and so forth. The manner in which they had to travel was not the most desirable. Trains were segregated, there were not many buses running in those days, but that's what they expected, that's how it went."

The first school for blacks in Nueces County was Catholic, opened in the late 1860s; a Protestant school opened soon after. The establishment of a public school system in the following years resulted in the closing of the private institutions. Although there were schools for blacks, grades did not extend beyond the sixth year. Parents recognized the importance of an education - the editor of the Nueces Valley Weekly noted in 1872, "Colored parents show much zeal and earnestness in the great work (of education), and accordingly inspire their children in this important cause." (42) Simultaneously, employers and parents saw what work their children could do in the cotton fields. Pay was given on the amount picked and the economic need for keeping children in the fields became greater than the need for keeping them in school. Many black parents, however, saw to it that their children stayed in school for all six years regardless of the hardship. At the end of that time, they had to send the youngster away to San Antonio, Houston or Galveston where black high schools boarded students. Sometimes the money was available for further education; often it was not.

Dr. Williams: "My father, I don't think, had any more than a sixth grade education, but he was pretty industrious. He was able to establish a business. He was a grocer. He went about the streets selling vegetables.

He also became an excellent musician and could play an organ and wind instruments; later he became a teacher and directed bands."

Until 1919, Mr. Williams owned a building which housed a barber shop, cafe and, upstairs, an auditorium for local and visiting bands. He played in a band - Pick Wick - whose members were almost entirely self-taught musicians. "Not only did they play regular marching music, they also played jazz. I think my father was probably among the original ragtime jazz musicians. I heard him play many times." The building, auditorium and all, was lost in the storm and "He never did quite recover from that."

The family moved to San Antonio where, a few years later, Mrs. Williams died. Their son returned to Corpus Christi to live with an aunt and finish elementary school. He then rejoined his father in San Antonio and was able to attend junior high school. By then, his father was the director of a band and worked as a waiter at the St. Anthony Hotel. "In his off time, they played gigs; most of the time, he played coronet but sometimes he played the trumpet or trombone."

When his son was fourteen, Mr. Williams died. The teenager returned once again to his aunt in Corpus Christi the same year that Solomon Coles School added grades: "At that time, one graduated from the eleventh grade."

After finishing high school, Williams attended a small black college in Mississippi. "It was one of the several colleges that was founded after slavery by the American Missionary Association, which was then affiliated with the Congregational Church. They came south and not only established high schools but colleges for blacks. In Texas, they established Tillotson College which they later combined with Sam Houston State."

"I didn't come directly here after graduating from college, but I finally came here and taught school. At that time, black teachers received twenty per cent less (pay) than white teachers. The pay scale was not that much; the starting salary for blacks was $896.00 a year; eighty dollars a month for twelve months. For whites, it was $1,200.00 a year which averaged out to one hundred dollars a month."

"During my first year teaching here - 1942 - I got elected president of the Faculty Club. The school teachers in Dallas, through the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), sued the Dallas Independent School District for equalizing the salaries of teachers. It was taken to the United States Supreme Court and the Court upheld that they must pay all teachers the same amount. In as much as I was president of our Faculty Club, I immediately proposed that we petition the board here. At that time, W.B. Ray...was president of the board and Marvin Baker was superintendent of schools. I was spokesman for the group."

"Actually, at the salary scale they were paying, all they needed was about $5,000.00 extra dollars and they could equalize everybody's salary; then you got increments of one hundred dollars or $150 a year, based on tenure."

"I was married when I came here to teach and we had one child; we had another while I was here. I just couldn't see supporting a family (on that salary), even with my wife teaching also. World War II started, was in progress when we came to work here, but I wasn't drafted because I was teaching science. I liked teaching very much, probably if they were paying then what they are paying now, or anything close to it, I would have stayed

with it. (Instead) I went to medical school."

"Something that is not very well known...since blacks could not go to the University of Texas Medical School, the State of Texas had to pay the difference between the tuition at whatever school the blacks went to outside of Texas and the University of Texas Medical School. They had to pay the person's fare from wherever you lived to that (school) and back one time - one way going, one way coming. I always used to come home for Christmas. That was at my expense; when I got ready to return at the end of the year, then I got my fare again; that along with some other things, I managed to scuffle my way through medical school."

"Black medical schools had certain things that the student had to do -- things that would never be thought of (in white schools), things to graduate...we had to do home deliveries. The doctors would be going out to areas where they could not use the hospital, so they would have to learn to deliver the babies at home. That's what I had to do when I first came here.

"I was about the fifth black doctor to come to Corpus Christi. One built his own hospital, but he later moved to California. I learned to do deliveries and I got to know the people in the radiology association. They had a lab...in the Medical Professional Building. I would take whatever lab work I needed done down there and they would mail me the results. Black patients were segregated (but) I would send the patient who had to be x-rayed down there; I got to know all of them."

(1952) "I had one patient who had a weird anemia and needed blood. I didn't know how to handle that. I took her myself to Memorial; I had to tell the intern about her case. Then he called another doctor and that

doctor said the woman had had a miscarriage. (The patient's) mother was just dissatisfied with where she was, she was out in the hall, and dissatisfied with the doctors. So she signed out against my advice. I said, 'She's going to die if she doesn't get some blood.'"

"I decided I would try and get some blood and give it to her at home. I went to the blood bank at Memorial and they directed me to Dr. Jerome Nast. I told him my predicament and he called around to see. (He was told) it was only open to the members of the Nueces County Medical Society and should be used in hospitals. Then I went to Spohn and I talked with Sister Mary Vincent (Mother Superior and Hospital Administrator). She said, 'Well, bring your patient over here and we'll take care of her. You have to call one of the doctors on our staff to see her, but you can go along and see her with him. Who would you like to call?' I said, 'Dr. Nast.'"

"We got her down there. I told them, 'Cross-match the fluid on this lady and type her for blood while we wait for Dr. Nast,' which they did."

"When he came, he looked at her and said, 'Oh my God, she's really washed out.' And he was there to see her die."

"Mother Vincent said, 'I want you to put in an application for membership on our staff. Don't worry about being elected to the staff, I'll see to that, but you have to have a sponsor in each department. You'll be able to do what you want to and what you're able to do, but a sponsor will be free to come by and supervise.' I said, 'Well, that will be all right with me.' I felt confident. I didn't have a minute's trouble."

"At that time, my first year here, Dr. Hall had been working with the NAACP for a long time, as I had as a school teacher, which most teachers

didn't do - they were afraid. (By the time I got here) nothing would do, I became president of the local branch of the NAACP. We were active in a lot of things and my name had appeared in the paper a number of times. Some people who didn't know me considered me to be a trouble-maker, which I was not."

"It took me longer to get on staff at Memorial, but I persisted. I wrote to the board of directors and everybody. Finally, I was accepted there. I had come to know just about every doctor in town and was on good terms with all of them. Once they came to know me, they didn't have anything against me as a doctor, they felt I was capable. Often, I would call them for consultation on surgery and got to assist the surgeon."

"When it was put to a vote at Memorial, it was the administrator who was the stumbling block. Mother Vincent, as administrator at Spohn, just pushed it right on through. But I had a hard time, then I got a little shove because I told Mother Vincent about it and she got behind me, too. Two or three years later, I applied for membership in County Medical Society because in order to be on staff at either hospital, you have to be a member of the Medical Society. Becoming a member, in paying one's dues, you automatically become a member of the Texas Medical Society and American Medical Association, which blacks could not be a part of then."

One is elected to the County Medical Society and must win by a two thirds majority. "The first time (my name was submitted), I did not get elected and the press got wind of it. Some said it was because I was in the NAACP and they were putting me up to do that, but that had nothing to do with it. Then Dr. Bernard got elected president of the Medical Society

and he asked me to apply again. I did not apply during his term and then one day I received a call from Dr. Galbert. He said, 'Hey, can I come over to your office for a few minutes?' I said, 'Sure.' He came and said, 'Look, a lot of us feel mighty bad about what happened to you, not getting into the Medical Society. I would like for you to reapply.' So I did and this time I was overwhelmingly elected. That was in 1956."

"Later, I had an operation with another doctor at Spohn and he said, 'Man, you don't know how many friends you have. There were people who hadn't been to the Medical Society meeting in years, just like me, but they were all there last night. They had a speaker from Dallas and he was amazed at the number of people who turned out to hear him speak.' Then when they got on to the business of the thing, it came to me. There were a few dissenters, but when they put it to a vote, I was overwhelmingly elected. After I got in there, when a (black) doctor would make application, on the third reading they just passed ballots around...nothing is said. It's just a matter of course. Somebody had to break the ice; that somebody happened to be me."

The achievements of Dr. Williams must be understood in the light of realities of discrimination in South Texas. A great deal has been accomplished by blacks in recent years and the attitudes they had to work against indicate the extent of their task. It was not only the racial attitudes of most whites that held them back, but the animosities held by some Mexican-Americans and by blacks for each other, as the following excerpts from interviews conducted in the 1930s indicate.

A Negro cotton picker:
I think they should not let the Mexicans come in here. It makes it hard for the American people to get work. The Mexicans will work cheaper and keep the prices down. They can live on next to nothing. A tortilla and a cup of coffee will stand them for a half-day. We eat meat and bread about the same as you-all. Yes, we could work on less but we don't want to. The Negroes and Mexicans mix some if the Negro can speak Spanish. They come to some of our dances and dance with our girls if we will let them. They used to more than they do now. They won't let us dance with their girls so now our boys won't let our girls dance with them.

There used to be Mexicans here on this farm but they moved away. Why? They wanted $1.25 for picking. We picked for $1.00. It was good cotton. More Negroes would come down here if there were not so many Mexicans and they could get better wages. They think they are as good as you-all. Do you think so? Well, that is up to you-all (implying 'if we are not, why should the Mexicans be?')

We make pretty good money, about $2.60 a day, but the money goes away about as fast as we make it. Women get a lot, and whiskey, and gas. This bunch of Negroes does not gamble much. Cotton picking machines? I hear it's not much of a success, but if it is it will be hard on us. What will we do? (43)

A group of Mexican cotton pickers:
Negroes and Mexicans do not mix. It does not look right to see Negroes and Mexicans together. Their color is different. They are black and we are white. It is all right for Americans and Mexicans to mix. We are both of the white race (these Mexicans were very largely Indian). The niggers pick more cotton than we but we pick cleaner. (44)

As in the days of slavery, blacks were unable to vent the feelings of oppression they felt against the whites and so turned their anger upon Mexicans or other blacks. Because the whites were in positions of authority, the blacks often had to curry their favor, a demeaning posture that eroded their own self-image. The same thing happened among the Mexican-Americans but because the two groups were competing with each other for jobs, there

was little chance for a coalition of the minority groups until the 1960s.

There were of course, extensive civil rights efforts conducted nationally from the close of the Civil War onward. Blacks were elected to state and federal offices, appointed to posts and gaining positions previously closed to them. All these accomplishments, however, did not always have an immediate or significant effect on the average person faced with day-to-day survival. Changes were mandated and legislated but it took years for them to be felt in smaller cities, especially those in the South. While there were many whites who assisted the blacks in their quest for equal rights, there were many, too, who wanted to keep blacks 'in their place' -- as a subservient work force who would do the worst jobs for low wages. These whites saw the push for equal rights as a threat to their own financial security and to what they considered the 'proper order' of racial segregation. There is a natural human tendency toward those of one's own race, ethnic background, etc., and a suspicion of anyone different. For the sake of our own self-image, we need to believe that the group we belong to is as good as, if not better than, any other group. To feel otherwise would be admitting inferiority. Many whites convinced themselves that blacks were innately inferior in order to justify using them for their own financial gains and to make themselves feel superior. The need to feel superior usually sprang from feelings of inadequacy and fear. This attitude goes beyond the natural tendency and subjugates anyone seen as a threat. Black equality was seen as a threat to economic stability since blacks would require minimum wage for work performed and would become competitors for land, goods and services. In the

aftermath of the Depression, this was frightening, especially to those who competed with the blacks for jobs. As a result, organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan found many sympathizers in South Texas where both blacks and Mexican-Americans, as well as Jews, Germans, Czechs and other Europeans, stood to make gains if 'allowed' to be considered equal to white Americans. There is perhaps no reaction so intense as that which occurs when one's lifestyle, livelihood and ingrained values are threatened and the fight for equality required dedication and perserverence. Blacks were not the only ones to suffer abuse from discrimination, but they were the first to try to change the situation.

Reverend Harold Branch arrived in Corpus Christi in January, 1956, from Austin to begin pastoring at St. John Baptist Church. School integration had started in 1955 and black students now attended formerly all-white schools. Still, according to Reverend Branch, "We had something of a dual system going on at the time, because we had Solomon Coles Junior/Senior High School plus two elementary (schools): Booker Washington and Carver. Special lines had been drawn for these children to go to these schools. However, any of them in these schools who wanted to go to a formerly all-white school could go."

As the student population at Solomon Coles began to dwindle, a decision was made to make the high school into an elementary and send the students to other high schools. "Now these students didn't want to go. They had been leaders at Solomon Coles, football stars. Coaches in the other schools wanted these fellows, but the fellows had the pride, the strong history, had been state champions a number of times. (They were) student

leaders of school organizations, officers, so the prospect of being pushed out to go to these other schools was resented."

Eventually, Coles became an elementary school and the black students went to Ray, Miller or Carroll High Schools. Although many of the black students felt uncomfortable in the predominatly white schools, the excellence of some in sports enabled them to achieve certain acceptance. In the peculiar attitude of the time, students were integrated on the football field, but their parents were segregated in the stands. Dr. Williams recalled an incident at Buccanner Stadium:

"I went to the football game one night and the person selling tickets was asking everyone who went up to the window, 'We have seats in this section, that section...where would you like to sit?' When I walked up to the window, and I had my youngest son with me (the ticket seller) said, 'I've got just the ticket for you,' and handed me a ticket. It was in Section A, which is on the southwest side of the stadium. I said, 'I don't want to sit in Section A. You've been asking everybody else where they wanted to sit and when I walk up here you know where I want to sit.' He said, 'There's a policeman over there. I'll let him tell you.' I said, 'Call him. It doesn't make any difference to me.' He said, 'Well, I can't sell it.' I said, 'Why can't you sell it to me? I'm a citizen. You've got blacks on the team.' I stopped traffic for a long time, they had to sell tickets around me. Finally I went on and took the ticket in Section A and sat in Section B."

"The next time the school board met, that next week, I appeared before the school board. I happened to run into Willie Bonilla and I said, 'Look,

I want you to act as my lawyer today.' I told him what I was going to do and he said, 'O.K.'"

"When the time came, I showed them my ticket and said, 'I'm a citizen of Corpus Christi. I'm a taxpayer. I went to Buccaneer Stadium, the team is integrated, but they wouldn't sell me a ticket (for) any place but in Section A. That's a violation of my constitutional rights. If I go to another game and they try to do that, I'm going to sue you and here's my lawyer. He knows what I plan to do.' After the meeting was over, one of the board memebers said, 'Dr. Williams, we would like for you to stay a little while after the meeting.' They said, 'We're sorry for what happened. I assure you that it won't happen again.' And it didn't."

Williams acknowledges that the threat to sue was a ploy: "It was just a big bluff I was pulling." Nonetheless, the fact that extreme measures had to be threatened, and in some cases carried out, to gain basic freedoms was an indicator of how difficult progress was to achieve. Very little was given; nearly every gain involved a battle.

There was some support from the white community; Dr. Williams noted, "The Caller-Times has always been a liberal paper. They usually supported everything we ever fought for; they would editorialize favorably in our behalf."

By the time Reverend Branch arrived in 1956, the H.E.B. swimming pool and lunch counter were integrated: "The first meal I ate in Corpus Christi was at a lunch counter at the H.E.B. grocery at Port and Leopard."

Some changes came about as results of outside pressure and the possibility of adverse publicity, according to Reverend Branch. "...somewhere

in the early 1960s, (when) Ben McDonald was mayor, a (school) from Waukegan, Wisconsin brought their band down here for the Buccaneer parade festivities. The Associated Press picked up on the story of this band coming to Corpus Christi and in setting forth the story, it was discovered there was one black child in this band and the parents were coming along. Master Host was the new hotel in town and they were going to stay over there. Of course, when they found out they had a black family coming, they called me to find a good, colored home for the family to stay in. So when the Chamber of Commerce wrote Wisconsin and told them about the arrangement and that this black family was going to stay in a nice, colored home, the whole school said, 'If we don't all stay together, we won't come at all.' This was communicated to our mayor from their mayor. Then McDonald talked to Bruce Collins, who owned the hotel, and said, 'Now, Bruce, you are going to have to change your policy. You've got to let this family stay with the rest. We can't have this kind of a scandal and the press and everybody picking it up.' So they agreed to let this family live there. Then following that, whenever a convention came to town and there were black delegates, they could stay in the hotel. But we who lived here couldn't go to the hotel. If you came from out of town, you could stay, but if you lived here you couldn't. This was an actual fact."

Generally, it was the possible loss of business, of tourist dollars, that brought about the more rapid change of policy. For the blacks who lived here, the ability to enter any establishment took longer to attain.

The integration of Corpus Christi bowling alleys was a lengthy process that Reverend Branch was involved in from the beginning.

"When I came to town, I was invited to become a part of the Corpus Christi Baptist Association...and Minister's Union. After our Monday meetings, we would bowl and I could go to Ayers Bowling Lane with the minister's group; they would let me in to bowl with them. But when I went back to sort of sharpen up, they didn't want to let me bowl by myself. Finally they agreed to let me. Then I had a group of ministers here in an institute from all over Texas and I went to take them. They didn't want them to bowl. Finally, after a high level conference, they agreed to let them bowl because we were all preachers."

"Then one day, I took one of our youth with me to bowl. Of course they wanted to know if he was a preacher. I said, 'No, he's not.' 'Well, you can bowl, but he can't.' When they were adamant, we went to Dr. Colson's office (Colson was a strong supporter of equal rights). Jimmy Barnard was mayor of Corpus Christi and we held a secret meeting - ten or eleven o'clock at night - at his house with the City Council to discuss this matter of (an) open accommodations ordinance growing out of this situation of bowling."

"There was a bowling alley at Six Points that opened its doors to black teachers and school employees to come in and bowl between five and seven one evening, before the leagues began. They couldn't bowl any other time, just that time. This bowling alley was blackballed by the Ayers chain. They blackballed the Six Points Bowling Alley and forced them out of business. We had quite a ruckus, trying to get the Ayers chain to open up."

"Buccaneer (Bowl) was owned by people out of state; (it) was the

first one to really open up for blacks to bowl. When Buccaneer first opened, we took a bus load of our kids and went out and had a bowling party. The second time we went to have a party, somebody saw us driving up in the bus and they thought we were coming for a sit-in. We had already sat down with the owners and everything had been opened up. Someone called the television station and said that St. John Baptist Church youth was staging a sit-in. When the photographers and television stations got there, we were all inside bowling. They had been scooped. We just didn't let them know; we didn't make any fuss."

Although a few businesses opened up to blacks without any pressure being exerted. Nearly all had to be approached on an individual basis. Reverend Branch continued:

"Now the movies. When I came, blacks could only go to a movie that was located in The Cut and (they) could sit upstairs at the movie at Waco and Leopard. We couldn't go to downtown movies."

"Bruce Collins, the same man who owned the (Master Host) hotel, owned the movie and we got together and worked out for the movies to be opened. All of our churches that Sunday selected certain adults to be in the initial group and worked out instructions and everything in case we caught any opposition from anyone; how we would act; how we would conduct ourselves. At one o'clock, the adults would go and integrate the movies before the kids got out of school."

When Reverend Elliott Grant came to Corpus Christi in June of 1962, as pastor of St. Matthew's Baptish Church, he joined with Williams and Branch in the integration efforts. They had accomplished a great deal, but

housing was still closed and blacks were still discriminated against in hiring practices. Fortunately, according to Reverend Grant, "All of the country kind of got caught up into this thing of equal rights, equal facilities, open policy for all the citizens of the United States and I think that kind of caught on here. (That) gave us a little bit more power to change."

Initially, Reverend Grant worked to set up an interracial council made up of members of the black, white and Mexican-American communities. The purpose was to work together, peacefully, to achieve the rights being fought for across the country.

The lawsuit against the school board, over the redrawing of district boundaries, had "started things" by bringing the issues of equality into the open.

Reverend Grant: "If you really want to know the situation in Corpus Christi in 1962: (local) blacks could not check into hotels, use (any but the H.E.B.) swimming pools; the golf course was not open; no open housing. As for getting out of here (The Cut), buying into the deep southside was a thing unheard of."

Advances were made slowly until the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in April, 1968. Throughout the United States, blacks who had waited patiently for the deliverance of the basic rights they deserved as citizens, exploded in rage. The death of the man who had preached "love as the means of achieving equal rights" (45) and who had become the symbol of the movement, made many blacks feel that nothing further could be achieved without violence. Reverend Grant remembers the night of April fourth: "There were

blacks who were gathering on the streets, threatening to burn and destroy our city. I got up that night and stood on the street and asked them not to do that and (promised) that I would take their fight to the City Council and other places, wherever they wanted."

"They wanted jobs; there were no jobs open for black students in Corpus Christi at that time. They had a few slots out at the (naval) base, but more likely Anglo kids would be the ones hired. About that time, we got sixty more slots awarded from Washington for this area. The commander out there worked with me on this and we got blacks moved into jobs, and Mexican-Americans as well, because you couldn't discriminate in opening it up. But that was the first thrust in getting black kids off the streets and getting jobs for them in the summer."

The issue of open housing was approached the next year. "We had an open town hall meeting down at the coliseum in 1969 for open housing. They (City Council) were saying we weren't having any problems, but we were. In the interracial council, we had some Anglo people working with us. We would have blacks go when we would see an advertisement for apartments for rent or houses for sale; we would call up the owner and he would say, 'Yes, we have an opening.' And once they get there and (the owner) finds out they are black, they'd say they had just rented it and didn't have any openings. The way we caught them with that was our good Anglo friends would go right behind them and ask if they had an apartment for rent. They would say, 'Yes.' That's the way we caught up with that; of course, it was quite a fight."

"We had a march on City Hall asking for facilities to be opened to

blacks. Dr. Williams was leading the fight and we were doing the following. I made a statement that maybe we should march on City Hall. I don't believe in getting out and screaming unless you have to scream. I think there's a time to scream and a time to stop screaming and be able to sit down after you get the attention of the powers and see if you can't work out something in the way of negotiation. If you don't love each other, at least you can respect each other...I don't think there's a law you can legislate that can make people love one another, but I think there is a law that will make you respect one another. I think this is what we received: respect for our stand and our diligence in the fight to eliminate these things."

"The City Council and the mayor, Jack Blackmon - Ronnie Sizemore was on the Council - they had a change of heart. At first they said, when we marched, it was hotter inside City Hall than it was on the outside. But we did have some Anglo friends who marched with us and some religious groups. We got those things open and we got public facilities open, an ordinance for open housing passed through the city. We had a federal ordinance, (but) if you didn't have anything on the books locally, it took a long time to get any action from a federal level. We seem to see a different light in the city of Corpus Christi."

"We had a great deal of personal frustration; it took time; it didn't happen overnight, you know. The Human Relations Committee was set up in the city of Corpus Christi from this thrust, but that did not happen overnight."

"When I made the statement that maybe we should march on City Hall,

maybe we should give them a shot in the arm, (to) let them know we meant what we were saying, that we were being backed up. That night, the news came on; I never will forget. The guy (newsman) blew it up strong on Channel 10 (KZTV) and had me pointing my finger. You know how they can make you look. I had an anonymous call from an Anglo who said, "You black s.o.b. If you don't get out of our town before morning we're going to burn you out!'"

"That was a night of unrest, frustration and fear. I called Dr. Williams and Mrs. Mattie Flowers, who was also working with us. I told them, 'Now look, I've had a threat made on my life. I don't want my family to know about it.' Dr. Williams assured me, 'Nothing like that has ever happened in Corpus Christi.' I said, 'Well, you don't really know what is going to happen, because you got a lot of people now that are sick. In case something happens to me, I want you all to investigate it thoroughly and find out what's going on and be sure to protect my family.'"

"Of course, nothing happened. Still, I didn't know that at the time. Every car that passed my house...I was awake. I lived with that fear for about a month before I really began to feel at ease and be comfortable in my own house or riding in my car."

In spite of the strides made toward realizing the civil rights of all, Reverend Grant thinks the current situation in Corpus Christi is "not perfect, but we've made a lot of progress. I just don't want to see us retrogress and get into a state of turning the clock back. We still have that feeling of 'Blacks are supposed to be in a certain place', and 'Mexican-Americans are supposed to be in a certain place' and you stay in your place.

Well, I don't know where my place really is, when it comes to that. During the time of segregation, I was told that all the time; that's what frustrated me. I really didn't know where my place was. You get on the bus, you rode in the back; you get on the elevator, you ride together; you get on the train, you ride up in the front; wherever the danger was, that's where you rode. You ride on the front coach of the train in case the engine would blow up; you would be the first one to get scalded. So I really didn't know where my place was. Finally, I found we all have a place in this world, and it's not at the back of the bus."

Reverend Grant, a member of the Corpus Christi Independent School District Board of Trustees, recalled an exchange he had with Dr. Dana Williams, school superintendent: "Dr. Williams...came here in 1962...and he used to say, 'Reverend Grant and I came to Corpus Christi on the same train.' I said, 'We may have come here on the same train but I'll tell you one thing, we weren't riding in the same coach. But if we leave here now, we'll be riding in the same coach. We'll ride together.'"

Current problems for South Texas blacks center aroung three major issues: the diversity of the black community; the relatively small population; and the attitudes of non-blacks.

Dr. Williams stated, "The discriminations that are made now are more subtle; there's a degree of tokenism here. A business hires one black to a significant position and points to the fact, saying, 'We don't discriminate. We have a black.'"

"Everybody is taken on a basis of merit, they can still discriminate. That, to an extent, affects the Mexican-American too, but not to the extent that it affects blacks. There are so many of them (Mexicans) here and so few of us...That's not true everywhere; go to a place like New Orleans or Atlanta...you see a lot of blacks in high positions."

"We have a few blacks that are doing well (in Corpus Christi). We don't have any who are fabulously wealthy. Some are doing well. There are not enough blacks in Corpus Christi for there to be too much stratification. Places where there are large numbers of blacks...the society is stratified just like it is in any other group. You take a Mexican-American, their society is stratified, based upon wealth, profession, on down to labor."

There is some diversity within the group, but it is based on experiences rather than economic differences. In spite of varying interests and goals, many blacks share common experiences that provide a sense of unity. As Reverend Branch pointed out, "Some blacks have had experiences (with whites) that haven't been altogether comfortable...I guess they have pressures, from both sides; within the black community if they are in the white community. If you go too far in your relationships, say...you live guarded, you live protected, you don't live really open."

According to Branch and Grant, there are black needs that cannot be met in the white community, especially in the area of religion.

Religion, traditionally, has played a large role in black cultural life. Reverend Grant: "We do have a strong faith in God. I don't think that black people could have come thus far without a strong, dynamic faith in God and belief that there is going to be some relief somewhere. I think

it's just like the children of Israel, who served under hard task masters for a long time and God said, 'Moses, I want you to go tell Pharoah, "Let my people go."' God sends the prophet or the preacher to the king but never the king to the prophet. He did not send Pharoah to Moses, but He sent Moses to Pharoah; He did not send Ahab to Elija, but He did send Elija to Ahab. We just kind of believe God intervenes in some way where there is oppression."

"There is a little bit of difference in our feeling. When you come into a black congregation, a lot of times you're going to hear 'Amens', going to see rejoicing, going to hear screaming out, going to hear all this kind of a thing. That is no guarantee that all of this is a spiritual movement... but it does carry with it a bit of spirituality. I think the thing that is so spiritual about it, is when you can come within these walls, or any walls where there is worship going on, and you can leave with the desire to serve, to go out and realize that you came out of that same world."

Reverend Branch concurred: "I guess there's a freedom in friendship of the warm association of togetherness."

Although the black population of Corpus Christi is small in relation to the white and Mexican communities, two blacks, Ed Samples in 1975 and Herbert Hawkins in 1981, have been elected to the City Council. Reverend Grant recalled, "When I came here it never would have been thought of, it never had been conceived, in the hearts and minds of Anglos or blacks, that a black would be able to be on (the) City Council. That was never conceived in the hearts and minds of black people. With six or seven per cent of the population, how can this be done? Well, I think Corpus Christi

should be proud of herself, that she has made the kind of progress and has given the chance to the voters of Corpus Christi who have given blacks a chance to prove that they can be concerned not only about blacks, but about Corpus Christi as a whole. I never thought when I came that I would serve on the (CCISD) board; no way. Now I am, I'm there."

The attitudes that many non-blacks exhibit toward blacks today are based more on ignorance than purposeful discrimination. Because they were separated for so long, many blacks and whites are still uncomfortable with each other, and are laboring under false assumptions concerning each other. There are indications that many whites fear blacks, perhaps from feelings of guilt about the treatment delivered, perhaps due to stereotypical ideas some whites still harbor. There are also indications that some blacks are aware of these fears and exploit them as a means of defense against a system they feel is still discriminatory. In any case, there is a great deal of misunderstanding between the groups.

Since the 1960s, integration has become less of an issue politically and legally. However, Reverend Grant states, "You still have that undercover segregation that you don't know is there. You can meet them and they are full of smiles, they are very cordial, but if you really dig down deep, 'scratch where it really itches', you get a reaction." This is not true of all whites, of course, but the fact that racism is still a reality makes blacks wary in their dealings with whites.

The one arena in which cultural attitudes are most evident is the classroom. Most blacks interviewed stated that education has the greatest potential for alleviating problems and, simultaneously, can provide the

most damaging experiences for the black child. The policy of forced busing has served to alienate blacks and whites, although that was never the intent of the policy. Reverend Grant explains, I have studied this business of busing, the mixing of students...we have violence between students and teachers who are forced to work together. We have teachers who do not want to teach in the westside schools, particularly in predominatly black (schools), where the black or Mexican American student is eighty to ninety per cent of the student body. We have Anglo teachers who do not want to be there. We have Mexican-American teachers who do not want to teach in an all-black situation. They don't understand the culture of blacks, they're not sympathetic. They do not know that in coming from the black neighborhoods we have a class of blacks who do not have but one parent, maybe don't have either parent. (They may be) living with a grandmother or an aunt. That one parent has to work and that one parent has to be Mama and Daddy. Thus, the black kids are left alone at home to get up and go to school. Many times they don't go or if they do, they are not properly dressed, not properly groomed, their hair is not combed. Many Anglo and Mexican-American teachers just don't want to be there."

"I have found that you have to deal with the kid on a one-to-one basis. You've got to find out what environment that child comes out of; what problems does that child face at home? Those problems he faces at home, or she faces at home, are going to come out in the classroom."

"I don't know too much about Mexican-American children, but since I've been working on the school board, I've discovered that there's not very much difference. You can't take a child, put him in a situation and say,

'You're going to act like an Anglo. You're going to conform here and you're going to be just like I want.'

"Then you've got another class of blacks - they have both parents, they have a home -- their parents are home owners -- they act completely different. They are middle class and color doesn't make any difference. They are able to fit into that type of situation. So you've got (to have) teachers and principals that understand that you're dealing with a different type of child when you're dealing with children who come out of a low economic class."

"I think the teacher who is going to teach in an integrated situation will have to learn that this child has to have some personal attention. - Touch a black child with love. Black is not going to rub off on them. You come to the classroom as an Anglo - you can touch them all day long and you're going to leave the same color. You're not going to change and you're not going to change his color."

"Before the busing, we did have black teachers who cared. Maybe the black teacher was the only teacher he had, but that teacher put her arms around that kid and said, 'I love you. I'm not going to give up on you, I'm going to report you to your parents.'"

Busing did have a positive side. The reason for court-ordered busing was to provide equal facilities. The Supreme Court found that the separate-but-equal facilities guaranteed by an earlier court decision were not, in fact, equal. When school districts were slow in providing equal facilities, the court mandated busing students to different schools in order to achieve racial balance in student distributions.

"The facilities (we had) were hand-me-down facilities, even the desks. The books were books that had come from the Southside. They had been used by Anglo students that handed them down to 'our little black friends', because, 'We're going to get a new library for the Southside.'"

"I think we've learned that all of these things won't create the best kind of environment for learning in the classroom unless we have equal facilities, updated curriculum and teachers who are well prepared. Maybe back then, black teachers did not have the education and background that you had with southside teachers. Now we have. Now I don't go along with the idea (that black students should have black teachers only). I think children will learn by voluntary mixing with blacks and not being forced to do so. I think our black kids will learn by voluntary mixing. I feel that neighborhood schools will do something for the child - something better than being bused out of the area when all the schools are closed in his neighborhood."

"I think two things are going to be pertinent in the black community: the church and schools. When you close up the church and the schools in the community, you leave nothing for the child to look up to. You've got to have some black teachers in these classes with black students, teachers who have achieved, who have made it in life, who have love and concern for the students; who will come back into that area and reach down and bring those kids up to the level they have achieved. I think that is what education is all about."

"I don't feel an Anglo teacher cannot do this, but that Anglo teacher has got to have that love and touch, that concern. The Mexican-American

teacher is going to have that love for humanity, for children, as they reach out to instruct, shape and mold the lives of black kids who are citizens in this United States as well as anyone else. It can be done. We've come a long way. We've got some more things to do, though...but we've come a long way."

ENDNOTES: BLACKS

[1]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 61.

[2]Ibid., p. 61.

[3]Ibid., p. 56.

[4]Ibid., p. 57.

[5]Ibid., p. 62.

[6]Jacqueline Jones, "My Mother Was Much Of A Woman": Black Women, Work, and the Family Under Slavery (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 31

[7]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 83.

[8]Ibid., p. 84.

[9]Jacqueline Jones, "My Mother Was Much Of A Woman": Black Women, Work, and the Family Under Slavery (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 5.

[10]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 78.

[11]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 10.

[12]Jacqueline Jones, "My Mother Was Much Of A Woman": Black Women, Work, and the Family Under Slavery (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 17.

[13]Ibid., p. 17.

[14]Ibid., p. 44.

[15]Ibid., p. 42.

[16]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 10.

[17]Jacqueline Jones, "My Mother Was Much Of A Woman": Black Women, Work, and the Family Under Slavery (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 25.

[18]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 10.

[19]Jacqueline Jones, "My Mother Was Much Of A Woman": Black Women, Work, and the Family Under Slavery (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 23.

[20]Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll; The World the Slaves Made (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), p.54.

[21]Jacqueline Jones, "My Mother Was Much Of A Woman": Black Women, Work, and the Family Under Slavery (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 29.

[22]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 80.

[23]Jacqueline Jones, Freed Women?: Black Women, Work, and the Family During the Civil War and Reconstruction (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980) p. 4.

[24]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 81.

[25]Jacqueline Jones, Freed Women?: Black Women, Work, and the Family During the Civil War and Reconstruction (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980) p. 7.

[26]Melvin M. Sance, Jr., ed., The Afro-American Texans (San Antonio: Institute of Texan Cultures, 1975), p. 15.

[27]Jacqueline Jones, Freed Women?: Black Women, Work, and the Family During the Civil War and Reconstruction (Wellesley: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1980), p. 15.

[28]Ibid., p. 51.

[29]Ibid., p. 27.

[30]Ibid., p. 27.

[31]Ibid., P. 66.

[32]Paul Schuster Taylor, An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas (University of North Carolina Press, 1934; reprint ed., New York: Russell and Russell, 1971), p. 197.

[33]Samuel Harman Lowrie, Culture Conflict in Texas: 1821-1835 (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1967), p. 126.

[34]T.R. Fehrenbach, Lone Star: A History of Texas and the Texans (New York: Collier Books, 1968), p. 287.

[35]Paul Schuster Taylor, An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas (University of North Carolina Press, 1934; reprint ed., New York: Russell and Russell, 1971), p. 34.

[36]Ibid., p. 34.

[37]Ibid., p. 35.

[38]Ibid., p. 36.

[39]Ibid., p. 37.

[40]Ibid., p. 38.

[41]Ibid., p. 33.

[42]Ibid., p. 191.

[43]Ibid., p. 314.

[44]Ibid., p. 314.

[45]Richard A. Boning, Profiles of Black Americans (New York: Barnell Loft, Ltd., 1969), p. 6.

Czech: There are not many Czech words that have been adopted by Americans, outside of proper names. In Corpus Christi, street names such as Kostoryz, Mokry and Sokol identify the section of town first settled by Czech immigrants. English did get *robot*, meaning work, from Czechoslovakia. There is a possibility that the word *grunt*, meaning someone who works hard, came from the Czech term for a household servant. 'Polka,' often attributed to the Poles, is really from the Czech *pulka*, and means half, as in 4/4 time.

The Sokol organizations are an important part of American Czech life. They are dedicated to physical recreation, primarily, although cultural development is encouraged. In Czech, *sokol* means falcon.

The first Czech newspaper in the United States was published in Racine, Wisconsin in 1855. The first Texas Czech newspaper was started in La Grange in 1879.

The first American man to become a saint was Czech. Bishop Jon Neumann, born in Bohemia, was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1977.

Well-known Americans of Czech descent include actors Walter Slezak and Jon Voight, artist Andy Warhol and football player George Blanda.

from The Ethnic Almanac

Moravians, Bohemians, Silesians and Slavs are usually referred to as Czechoslovakians although they are distinct groups with somewhat diverse histories. The country referred to as Czechoslovakia did not exist as a political unit until 1918.

The Czechs, composed of Moravians, Silesians and Bohemians, speak various dialects of a language classified as West Slavic, and are separated geographically from the Slavs by mountains.

In the sixth century A.D., the Western Slavs settled in the area between the Danube River and the High Tatra, Sudeten and Ore Mountains. This group, made up of Czechs and Slovaks, was continually overrun by invaders until one group, located in Moravia, managed to fight off the Franks and Avers and establish a Slavic state. Its tenuous existence disintegrated in 685 and the people were again invaded by various aggressors.

Because of the repeated invasions upon isolated villages, there was virtually no sense of nationalism. One local resident of Czech descent stated that the people of one village under threat of attack would pay the enemy to invade another village and leave theirs alone. In regions where commerce between towns was unnecessary due to the self-sustaining ability of each community, this practice was common and a requirement for survival. While it strengthened community ties, it also created distrust and suspicion of all outsiders.

During this period, Czechs enjoyed very little independence. They were nearly always under a foreign power and endured a great deal of oppression. Their culture alone held them together and while certain elements of it were affected by invaders, the core remained untouched.

In the ninth century, a loose alliance among the peoples grew into the Great Moravian Empire. Although successful, the Empire was dependent upon the qualities of the leaders, rather than on a cohesive government. The leaders did have a strong impact, however, and instituted important changes.

One, Prince Rostislav, invited Slavic-speaking missionaries Cyril and Methodius to convert his people to Christianity in the mid-800s. When the break occurred between the Eastern and Roman Catholic Churches, German missionaries displaced Byzantine Catholicism with Roman in the Moravian Empire.

Rostislav was succeeded by Prince Svatopluk and at his death in 894, the line of succession was in question. In the confusion, Magyars invaded Slovakia. Because of the geographic boundaries, the Czechs and Slovaks had always been distinct groups; the Magyar control separated them politically as well and from that time on, their histories differed.

The Czechs in Moravia and Bohemia established an independent state, allied with the Germans. This affiliation was mainly political and the Czech culture developed independently, borrowing little from the Germans. The Slovaks, however, did not enjoy such freedom and developed an identity similar to the Magyar, or Hungarian, culture.

In Bohemia, the Premyslid line held the throne and its leaders were recognized as kings. During their 400-year reign, they had alliances with the Holy Roman Empire, which surrounded Bohemia, and centered their capitol at

Prague (Praha). When the Premyslid line of succession ceased, the Luxembourg line of German kings ascended to the throne of the Moravian-Bohemian state.

Under the reign of Charles I (1346-78), the Kingdom of Bohemia flourished. When he was made Holy Roman Emperor, Prague became the Empire's capitol and a center of culture and learning. The first university in Central Europe was established there and the Czech language was promoted. After Charles' death, the Bohemian state declined but national pride and identity remained. This era of awareness enabled Czechs to strengthen their culture and traditions; in the ensuing years of political and religious turmoil, the culture was stable enough to endure.

Of the two regions, Moravia and Bohemia, the latter had the largest population and produced most of the leaders. It also witnessed most of the upheaval. In the early 1400s, John Hus, a Bohemian religious reformer and university professor, preached against the corruption in the Catholic Church and found great support among the people. In 1415, he was burned as a heretic, but his followers continued the cause. War between the Hussites and Catholics spread and eventually pit the Czechs against the Germans.

In 1526, the Turks took over Hungary. Because of their proximity, the Czechs assumed they were next and elected a Catholic Hapsburg from Slovakia to the throne. While this required subjugation to the foreign monarchy, it afforded them protection from Turkish invasion. The Catholic rulers gave religious freedom to the Protestant population for a number of years, but gradually the Protestant churches were closed. In 1618, Czech nobles deposed the Hapsburg king and started the Thirty Years' War. Within two years, the Czechs had been defeated at White Mountain and approximately 36,000 families left the homeland to avoid forced conversion to Catholicism. Bohemia,

once the center of power, became a minor province, and the Czechs were forced to suppress their culture and religion in favor of German.

By 1620, the entire political structure of Bohemia had changed. The Czechs became subservient to the Germans and Austrians appointed by the Hapsburgs and were required to adopt the German language and culture. Having once been a strong and united people, the Czechs met this oppression with hostility. Instead of suppressing their culture, they nurtured it, developing a national pride that sustained them and kept their traditions and customs alive throughout years of subjugation

In the 1800s, there were numerous nationalistic movements throughout Europe, particularly in Germany and France. The Czechs believed they had a chance for the restitution of their lands and rights. The Revolution of 1848 was bloody and futile. The Hapsburgs, with a strong military, crushed the rebellion and the Austrian/German Empire continued.

For many Czechs and Slovaks, the failure of the Revolution served as the impetus for emigration. They were frustrated by the lack of opportunities and education afforded them, since only the wealthy had any options. As one immigrant to Texas stated: "In the old country, one was never able to get away from being a cabinet-maker if his father before him had been one." (1) This lack of freedom coupled with forced military service instituted at the time drove many to emigrate. America, offering the chance to own property and advance socially and economically seemed the only alternative. Between 1850 and 1860, 23,000 Czechs and Slovaks had arrived in the United States; by 1900, the number had increased to 189,963. (2) Although the Revolution failed, the monarchy did grant peasants the right to emigrate and, as the figures indicate, many availed themselves of the opportunity.

The Czech dreams of independence did not end with the Revolution. During World War I, the Czechs and Slovaks renewed their drive for autonomy and hostility toward the Austrians and Germans increased. As a result, many Czechs and Slovaks were arrested and executed as traitors. Nationalist leaders, headquartered in Paris, established a council to gain recognition from the United States, Britain and Russia as an independent Czecho-Slovak government. On October 18, 1918, the Czecho-Slovak Declaration of Independence was issued from the United States.

The constitution was based on those of the United States and France. By 1922, a liberal and democratic form of government had created prosperity for the unified country. Many people of German descent, who did not like the new country and who resented being treated as a minority, caused tension especially in Slovakia. As Hitler gained more power in Germany, Czechoslovakia entered into alliances with Yugoslavia, Rumania, France and the Soviet Union.

In 1938, the Czechs held more political power within the country than the Slovaks. Although the Slavs were offered autonomy with the Czechs, they wanted independence and appealed to Hitler for assistance. When the country was taken by the Germans in 1939, the Czechs suffered initially for their resistance, but the Slovaks, too, were eventually dominated.

In 1945, the country was reunited but suspicion and distrust remained between the Czechs and the Slovaks. The two groups had gone through too much alone and, though they were closely related, their histories were too diverse to allow for total unity.

At the end of World War II, affiliations were made with the Communist Party in order to gain its help in reconstructing the government. Eventually, the Communists won control of the parliament and cabinet and Czechoslovakia became a Communist-bloc country.

The first Czech immigrant to America was Augustine Herrmann who arrived in Maryland with his family in 1659. He surveyed the region and won the praise of Lord Baltimore who rewarded Herrmann with 13,000 acres in northeastern Maryland. There Herrmann built his home, Bohemia Manor.

The first group immigration of Czechs occurred in 1736-37, when the Moravian Brethren (Hussites) left Saxony for Georgia. The sect had suffered religious persecution since the 15th century when the Catholic Hapsburgs defeated them at the Battle of White Mountain. Their settlement in Georgia was temporary; soon they established the colonies of Bethlehem, Nazareth and Lititz in Pennsylvania. In Bethlehem, they founded Moravian College for Women, the first institute of higher learning for women in the United States. (3)

Until the Revolution of 1848, emigration from Czechoslovakia was limited to the wealthy and they rarely had any need to leave; prior to 1850, Czech immigrants in America numbered less than 500. (4) Peasant farmers, locked into a class structure that limited opportunities, gained certain freedoms as a result of the Revolution, but the right to emigrate was, for many, the most important. By 1900, the number of Czech immigrants had risen to 189,963. (5)

After the newcomers settled in, they wrote home and encouraged others to join them. This was, perhaps, the strongest reason to emigrate: family and friends were there and could help in adjusting to a new life. Steamship companies like Mitters visited towns and villages extolling the opportunities

available in the United States. Czech and Slovak immigration increased every year and by 1910, 94,516 had come to America. (6)

Of the Czechs who came to Texas, most were from Moravia and Bohemia. The first group coming directly to Texas arrived in Galveston in 1852 and moved on to Cat Spring and New Ulm in Austin County. The Reverend Arnost Bergmann, who had urged them to come, was there to greet them. Eventually, these towns were known as the New Bremen Settlement. (7)

Within a year, 32 more families arrived. Since most of their money had been spent on their passage, they hired out as tenant farmers. Many settled near Fayetteville, originally a German community. Although problems existed between Czechs and Germans due to their experiences in the homeland, the two groups understood each other in terms of language and culture. In the late 1850s, Czech communities were established at Hostyn, Dubina, and Praha, while the German towns of Schulenberg and Halletsville included many Czech families.

Although nearly all the immigrants had been farmers, they had to learn about American crops and methods of cultivation. In addition, they had to adjust to a new language and culture. Since they settled in Czech or German communities, they had help with their entry into the American way of life, but often the town seemed more of an extension of the old country than a new land. This proved to be a greater problem later when many of these families set off on their own.

Through hard work and frugality, the Czech immigrants eventually saved enough money to buy their own farms and soon most of the land surrounding the communities was taken. Those who had arrived late were forced to look farther away for land to purchase.

I remember that there was a small glass of holy water and a small brush made of wheat on the table to use as sprinkler, a tall person dressed in white, the priest, many people kneeling around, and our father in the casket below the big cross which was hanging on the wall. On the trip to the cemetery I was sitting by the casket on the wagon and during the lowering of the casket I was trying to pull our crying mother away so she wouldn't fall in the grave. Today I clearly can see it as it was happening now--and these memories drive tears in my eyes."

"School at that time was a two-room divided in four classes and attendance was only half-days. There was only one teacher; third and fourth class before noon, first and second class in the afternoon. Even at such a short time of attendance we progressed very good; after six years we were qualified for high school. Many school pupils were exempt; they didn't have to go to school regularly to the age of 14."

"In the village of Zeletice was the Parish Church of St. James (Jakub). There were 4 mission villages attached to St. James--Nenkovice, Drazuvky, Stavesice and Strazovice. Up to 1890 the parish was under one priest Fr. Albert Vodicka. On Sunday and days of obligation he celebrated two masses and to the missions he walked to teach religion. Our village Stavesice had a smaller church with a cemetery all around it, and it was dedicated to St. Florian. On 4th of May, Feast of St. Florian, there always were services and on the following Sunday there was a village feast--a small one. Once a year the deacon made a visitation to all the parishes examining all the children from all the missions in religion with the help of teachers."

"In the year 1885 was the thousand year jubileum of St. Mathod's death, one of the first Slavic Apostles, and to Velchrad came processions of the

faithful from the whole state of Moravia. Fr. Vodicka led the procession from our village. All the processions met at Buchlovice near Velchrad. From there at night, in procession of 5,000, young bride-maids dressed in white and lighted candles, four or six abreast. Behind the cross and the bride-maids were marching young boys, older men and all elder people, praying rosary with singing and music from several bands. Everything was very beautiful. We small kids with empty stomachs, not to mention not having any money, became orphans. Between the high crowds of people the Sisters finally found us just before noon the next day. What really saved us was that one farmer in Buchlovice had about 30 sacks of pears in untied sacks standing by a wall. So without crying we lasted until morning. Then some uncle from Zeletice treated us with a piece of cake and grandma Nechwalska, mother of Joseph and Martin Hlavinka, gave us a piece of smoked ham and a piece of bread and after that we were more satisfied."

"When our father died in 1878, three of us--sister Agnes 12, brother Joseph 10 and me, 4 years were all of school age."

"It was too much weight for my mother to supervise the estate with minor children. To avoid hiring help she leased all the farmland, keeping only enough that she could farm with us small children. The land was leased for a period of time when brother Joseph became 16 years. Then in 1888 the contract ran out and brother Joseph with help of mother supervised the still intact estate until 1892 when he married and took over half of the estate, the other half was left to me to supervise. In 1893 the youngest sister Agnes married Frank Viktorin and I with mother ran the estate until 1895 when I was taken into the army. Until my discharge from army in 1897 my mother with the help of my brother and brother-in-law ran the farming of the estate. That same year I married Frances Polcr, also of Stavesice."

"After I was drafted, I was assigned to the 11th Company of the dragoons in the City of Stockrau near Vienna on the Danube River. I must tell you something from military life--I agree with the gypsy who said, 'It's beautiful when you look at it from atop of a willow tree.' After we were assigned to single squadrons, a Sergeant of Polish ancestry introduced himself to us, and welcomed us: 'I am your everything. Come to me if anything wrongs you. I will correct it.' After about two weeks, our eyes opened. After night feeding there was schooling on the first floor. We were in two lines, older men farther behind, us young boys went into rooms. Me and another friend, Selepa, stayed on the steps and listened to what they were teaching the older men. Here is what the Sarge said: 'It is up to you if the recruits are good dragoons. You have to beat them. If you don't I'll beat you. I know what kind all recruits are. They always complain of their things disappearing and they themselves bury it somewhere and then don't know where. And they say the older ones are stealing and that I will not judge.'"

"It was a sad look into the future. With beating it was not so bad, only one was very raw. Others didn't hurt anyone, but stole in full measure. Within a month our trunks were getting lighter. Everything was disappearing; what we brought, and also, what we got from the army: clothes brushes, belts, etc. As long as money lasted from home, I kept on buying and replacing the stolen goods. Then a friend told me, 'I am poor and have everything. When you see something is missing, keep your mouth shut, and take where you can find it.' After we trained ourselves, everything went well. Otherwise, everything went well, training on horses was easy. There was little walking and with sword and carbine, it was not difficult. Most attention was given to horseriding. For five weeks we rode without spurs. A few riders got their

spurs after two or three months. By Christmas only the worst riders were walking in boots without spurs."

"The sarge gave many older soldiers leave for Christmas holidays. Even the recruits who were good riders were told they could get 48 hours leave but few went home. I was also asked if I wanted to go home. I thought how long could I stay at home since the round trip took 16 hours? The sergeant answered, 'Next year you will get ten days.' It was my first Christmas away from home but it was joyful. It was a very strict fast-day before Christmas eve. Then there was a Christmas tree and choral singing."

"Christmas morning we marched to church for mass. Then there was a rich dinner and supper with some stronger refreshments. Only our girlfriends were missing. Otherwise everything was like at home. Life was peaceful except one soldier deserted and our sarge was very upset and mad. But everything went well. Some of the outburst from the old man (sarge) didn't bother us as we all got used to him, and time was passing by. The second Christmas was approaching quickly."

"Once we went on horses to Vienna (the empire's capital) to put on a big parade. There were to be three Emperors present: Austrian, German and Russian. There was going to be an inspection of the soldiers. A big rain ruined it. All three drove by us, not over 15 to 20 yards away, so I got to see all three of these heads-of-state from a very short distance. That Russian Czar was really a big man."

"Once late in the fall we were sent on a telegraphic request or order to Novy Zamky Castle in Slovakia. There was a heated election taking place between a Catholic candidate, Paul Kovac, and a mason, Istvan Kraus. Being in the service, I saw with my own eyes Kraus's lobbyist and how he took out his

billfold and was buying votes. As the story goes, he spent over 35 thousand crowns and Kraus won."

"New recruits arrived; not Slovaks but mostly industrial workers from around Brno. Those new recruits didn't appeal to the old man and in two months, out of 60 men, 16 ran away. The old man from anger was turning almost black, and he was taking the anger out on us. Due to his anger he canceled our leave, and such a service in the Army I began to hate. Three of us all got on our knees and begged him for a leave; he promised to throw us in jail. I explained everything to my mother in a letter, and I begged her to put in an application or request for my discharge. She did so and got assurance that as a necessary help in farming, I would be released. After that the old man's outrageousness didn't bother me. In April, 1897, I returned the military rags and put on mine. Unexpectedly the old man bid me a very friendly farewell and added, 'Go home and be merry.'"

"The year 1888 went by smoothly but 1889 was treaded with bad fortunes. Some pick-pocket got my billfold with a large amount of money, I lost a good cow, in May the barn burned down with a new machine and sheds for stock. During thrashing someone either carelessly or intentionally threw a monkey wrench into the thrashing machine. No one ever knew how it happened. We also lost our horses, and then hog cholera broke out. A head-on crash of our wagon with a drunken driver of a flour wagon and a carriage or buggy was followed by many sleepless nights."

"For answering at the Control Assembly with the word 'zde' (present) instead of German 'hier,' I with 6 others was arrested and jailed at the unmerciful or infamous Shpillberg Federal Penitentiary in Brno. This Czech word 'zde' was really a protest against the revoking of our language freedom which

was won by Slavic representatives after many years of tough fights in the parliament in 1885. But in 1897 due to the pressure of the Germans, it was again recalled. This caused a strong refusal from all the Slavs. One very patriotic priest by the name of Vldimer raised a mourning flag with these words: 'Justice in Austria died.' Since it was the first protest, he got out cheap--14 days in jail. Protests were mounting. Newspapers brought news of widening protests in Slovakia, Croatis, Corania, and also in Poland. People were objecting and to promote it every chance they got, they used the word 'jestem' instead of the German 'hier.' Courage began to build and the Austrian Government took drastic steps. December 6 the Military Court brought out the verdict on us. We were jailed at that time, me, Otmar Dufek from Kyjov, John and Peter Mechuras from Shardic, (farmers), Peter Pekorek from Svatobaric, father of 4, Yosef Polcar, cousin of my wife from Stavetsice, Hynek Kalivoda, accountant of Kyjov Hospital."

"The Prosecutor Colonel Trnka of German Co. 91, a traitor of Czechs, was asking for Kalivoda an extreme death penalty by hanging for answering Czech 'Zde' instead of German 'hier' and for singing the Slavic hymn 'Hey Slovane.' He asked life for Dufek, and for the rest of us 5 years in prison at Shpillberg. The President of the Court was a Czech patriot and he was asking 6 months for Kalivoda, 3 months for Dufek and 3 weeks for the rest of us. The military jury, of course all Germans, gave a verdict of Kalivoda 18 months, Dufek a year, and the rest of us 6 months at Shpillberg. In answer to this, Slavic representatives refused to vote 28 million crowns for the military if the men were not released from Shpillberg. This opposition dragged on for 5 months until one representative for Poland, Goluchovsky, gave the one vote necessary for the bill to pass. During this time we were

under investigation at Shpillberg Federal Penitentiary but it wasn't so bad. Relatives and friends had free access to us and patriots didn't fail us. Our wives were supported with money and they were not forbidden to bring us food and even beer and wine."

"After release from Shpillberg, I started in the fall of 1900 a large brick plant enterprise into which over 4 years I put 8,000 crowns, mine and borrowed. The enterprise didn't pay off due to my inexperience and other obstacles. The thought of the possibility that I might have to labor on my once owned property for someone else simply horrified and tortured me."

"Martin Hlavinka, brother of my brother-in-law, moved to America a few years before, about 1893, and settled at East Bernard, Texas. When I was serving time at Shpillberg for using the word 'zde', he wrote to me. 'Don't you have enough? What are you waiting for? Here in America we have freedom.' I answered him, 'I am coming to you,' but at home I didn't tell anyone except the nearest of kin. I didn't even say as much as goodby to anyone."

"On the Austro-Hungary and German boundary at Bohumin railroad station a policeman stopped me and prevented my getting on a German train. Just then another train came and I got away from him. I didn't have any sleep and was cold and so I fell asleep soon in the coupe. A traveler came on with several satchels. He observed me for awhile, then asked: 'Where are you going?' 'To visit my sick brother.' He smiled and said: 'You are going to America but this way you will not get there.' I kept on denying it as best I knew how. He said, 'Friend, I crossed the ocean three times there and back and I can understand travelers. Everybody can tell your intentions on you.' He introduced himself as Stephan Novacek, a traveling salesman or agent. But I don't remember now what he was selling."

"He said he was a year and a half on the road. 'If you want to come with me, I live in Bilovec and tomorrow I will get you safely across the border in Ratibor to Germany.' I believed him and openly told him why I was leaving, even that a policeman stopped me. It was night but neither one of us slept. He was telling me how to act and what to watch for on my journey. He talked soberly and favorably about America and added, 'There is future in America.'"

"With this kind of serious talk we came to his home early in the morning where his wife and children welcomed him very warmly. After a good breakfast, they fixed beds for us and we slept until dinner. Then he took me into town to look around and warned me: 'Where there are more blue caps (police) there you must move very slowly, keep playing up and down with your cane and they will pay no attention to you. And you will not have any luggage or bags.' We returned to his home and it was time to leave. These people wouldn't take anything for my stay and trouble so I offered him a bundle of clothes, working suit and two changes of clothes so it wouldn't be in my way. He took it and said he would give it to his workers. We went to Rotibor where he exchanged my Austrian money for German Marks and gave me a letter to his friend in Leipsig with his card. 'Don't worry,' he said, 'My name is known from Leipsig to Berlin.' He waited until the train came; we shook hands. 'Have a happy trip and lots of luck in America.'"

"Further traveling went almost without any difficulties. There were few Blue Caps (German Police) and then only on large railroad stations, but travelers were not bothered. In Leipsig, all of a sudden, a rustic-looking figure showed up and was running up and down in every coach as if he was looking for someone."

"In Berlin I changed trains and I didn't see him anymore. When I got to Bremen one of Missler's (the steamship company) agents picked me up at the station and brought me to Missler's office. There I discovered that I was short about 6 or 8 Marks to pay for a voyage to Galveston. I couldn't ask strangers to help me out by paying the difference. So I decided to get to American shore anyway possible which was on an early ship which went to Baltimore. From Bremen I notified my wife and mother where I was. I had sixty Marks left and after four days trampling around Bremen I finally got a ship December 7, 1904. The voyage had very stormy weather, and I lost my last money. Someone must have stolen it or I may have lost it, I don't know. I reported it to the Captain, but the money was not returned. After 17 days our ship arrived in Baltimore on Christmas Eve, December 24th. Before all the emigrants were questioned and released it was 4:00 in the morning. For some of the emigrants their friends were waiting and taking them to their homes in this promised land. Some were held up and their relatives were notified by telegrams. I put in my report that I was going to Martin Hlavinka, an uncle, and that he was standing good for me and had work for me. And he was so good that he sent me money for train fare and also some spending money with it."

"I was taken to the Southern Pacific Railroad Station from the port and got a ticket over a meter long. From this ticket every conductor tore off a piece. After three days of travel, I was on Texas soil, somewhere in Longview. Between Baltimore and St. Louis, Missouri, some German was asking where I came from. When he finally understood from Austria, he wanted to honor his countryman. He cut off a big chunk of chewing tobacco and handed it to me. It was sweet and I found out it was tobacco. My mouth was full, but I was afraid to

swallow it, and there was no place to spit it out. My face began to expand and finally the man pulled out a spittoon from under the seat. That was a hell of a good school for me and I never did try it again."

"Many times we had to wait a long time for another train in larger rail stations like Little Rock, Texarkana, and others, but the longest was Longview. On January 4th, 1905, I remember a very large waiting room and there I saw my first Negroes who were shouting and whooping it up from 6:00 p m. to 4:00 a.m.--and I was scared to death. That was my first and unforgettable night in Texas. In Houston, with six Polish young men, we got from the Pacific Station to the Central Depot, and we found a place to sleep. Then I had a shave and a good bath, a good meal in a restaurant, and I had a feeling that I was at home. From Houston, I got to East Bernard just before noon."

"Frank Vasek brought me to Hlavinkas where I stayed two or three weeks before they found work for me on a rice farm in Taiton for Frank Gurecky. I notified my family and mother where I was. On the 5th of February I started on my job for ten dollars a month up to September, and during thrashing rice the pay was $1.50 a day. At that time I sent for my wife and there were now two children, Marie and Joseph."

"My father-in-law sold the brick plant and farm. After paying debts he deposited over 6,000 crowns for us besides 4,000 crowns for my mother's retirement. With my wife and two children that year, in December, 1905, to Galveston came my brother-in-law Viktorin, sister and their children and brother-in-law and sister Josef Hlavinka with children."

"Work in the rice field was something new for me. Preparing the land and planting, bringing wood for reserve, keeping up the steam boiler, irrigating and thrashing. For wood I cut down trees in woods about 5 miles away

in June and July mostly by myself. Mustang Creek cut through Gurecky's farm and from there water was distributed by canals to rice fields."

"Repairing those canals was a slave job. Canals had to be deepened and cleaned with a grader and shovels. Down deeper, it was not dirt but mud mixed with roots and trash. It couldn't be picked up with shovel, nor fork, only by hands. For five weeks we played in water and made mud in a 6 foot canal in summer. Reward: Three months of fever off and on."

"I was preparing to farm on my own the coming year since my family was going to be together. From my savings I bought for $65.00 a pair of broken-in but mean Brahman Bulls, and with them I was farming 35 to 50 acres for 8 years. First year, I cropped on Mrs. Aloisie Vacek's farm, a widow of Vincent Vacek. The people there were mostly good-hearted to beginners. They gave many things and offered to loan equipment and offered credit. Josef Valigura, for example, almost forced me to buy a cultivator on credit for $18.00. I used it from 1906 to 1923 and sold it to John Pilcek for $15.00 at East Bernard."

"In Taiton everybody was my friend. Ignace Kahanek, Naisers, Lichnovsky families, Anton and Josef Valigura, Josef Dluhos, Gurecky, Felix Stavinoha, Bedrich Michna, and many others. My wife, though, was lonely and missed the relatives who were all settled around East Bernard and Hungerford--Hlavinkas and Viktorins. So in November of 1906, we were moving to East Bernard."

"There was not too much land to be plowed and by Christmas plowing was finished. It was too early for planting, so I was helping to break land (meadow) on the new farm of Uncle Martin Hlavinka. That year, the boll weevils were very bad especially near woods. From that tract by the woods we picked very little cotton. On another tract, due to too much rain, the cotton was grown up in vegetation but made much more per acre than the field by

the woods. The corn crop, though, made up for it. And the following year, 1908, the crop was much better. That year, I bought 50 acres of prairie land but I did not improve it because for two more years I was renting. In 1909, a hurricane left me only 3 bales of cotton; the following year was a very good crop. With the money I had on deposit in Europe, I bought 60 acres for $3,000. After Christmas we moved on our own. For several years the crops were light--some year better, some year worse. We were knocking it around the best we could and by 1918, the debt did not press us anymore."

"In 1920 I went to survey or look over the country in the state of Oregon. I liked the country. Old man Somr (neighbor) told me if I found a place in Oregon that he would buy my farm. I bought some property there and put up escrow money. When I got back I was disappointed. Old man Somr didn't hold his word and we stayed sitting in East Bernard, but it was eating my health. Just as the gypsy said to someone he was angry at, 'I don't wish you anything worse than a bad neighbor.' For three more years I had to haggle with them. In wet years, water damaged my crops as a neighbor stopped up the drain of water on his land. With the help of John Vashicek, the county built a drainage ditch, which drained the water from my land. After that, the envy of my neighbors didn't affect me."

"That same year my cousin Tomas Stanek bought a farm near Robstown, 17 miles west of Corpus Christi in Nueces County. He wrote me to come and help him to build buildings on his new place, and bring some cotton pickers. Four of us went. Crops were tremendous, the country-side and quality of the land was very appealing to me. I wrote my wife about it."

"In two weeks I got news that up until now the promising cotton crop, due to heavy rains, threw (sheded) all the fruit off, and was growing wild.

I felt like crying, the crop was miserable--we only made four bales. In 1923 I went to Nueces County to review the country for property to buy. After the second trip with my wife to this part of the country, we decided to sell our property in East Bernard and buy in Robstown, because around Corpus Christi the land is similar but there was a shortage of drinking water, and it was necessary to haul it from water stations. Around Robstown the well water was good enough to drink, so it was decided to buy property around Robstown. I made an agreement with real estate agent that I'll take out of 275 acre tract, 150 acres and Anton Charba who lived on the property the balance of 125 acres at 100 dollars an acre with the understanding that they (real estate people) will sell my farm. They came and offered me ten thousand dollars; fine. The contract was written up that I'm buying the whole 275 acres. That I refused and the contract was torn up. I sold my farm to John Konvicka and then bought the 150 acres according to the original agreement."

"Shortly before Christmas Eve in 1923, me and my family were leaving East Bernard. Railroad or boxcar I loaded besides furniture, farm equipment and stock with 5 thousand square feet of lumber in dry weather. It started to rain. The railroad agent promised that he will give me good service and he certainly held to his promise. It was obvious that the car was heavily overloaded the 50,000 pound limit, but it wasn't weighed anywhere. I paid 80 dollars plus $5.00 for one exchange. When we got to Robstown, it was pouring down rain, so we brought only the necessities to the new home and the rest of it stored in a cotton seed house of a gin company close to the rail tracks. After it was possible to get out, we brought the other stuff."

"It was the middle of February before we could get into the field. In 3 weeks we had 60 acres ready to plant. Weather was favorable, so a good crop was harvested and everything with farming went well."

"In 1926 we gathered 65 bales of cotton. Money from this I invested to improve the farm, working teams, and equipment. In 1930 I estimated that the crop will be excellent, but it started to rain or simply poured--water flooded the fields and cotton was standing in water. On low-lying land the fruit (bolls) was rotting, on higher ground cotton grew up to 10 to 12 feet high. We only made a little top crop. Out of the whole acreage we only salvaged 22 bales of cotton and the price was 6 cents. This was Hoover's prosperity. It really was hard for everybody, pickers were getting 20 cents up to as much as 25 cents a hundred for picking. We were lucky that I got money from savings for my mother's retirement who died and I could pay my obligations."

"In 1931 due to late preparation of land, crops were not encouraging, or rather a flop. There was no money to meet payments or taxes. At that time, Franklin D. Roosevelt became president and things began to turn for the better. I got a Federal Loan and with fair crops things went favorably. To this day I remember with what joy I was carrying home the release in 1945 after paying the last installment on my debt on the farm. From there on it was easy or calm to work with good health and the help of children who were on their own."

"Conditions had improved so much that in 1937 it was possible to thoroughly repair the run-down dwelling. When in 1938, our youngest daughter married, we were left alone. I still farmed with some hired help off and on. After five years of marriage, our youngest daughter became a widow. We took her to us. Her farm was sold and I was renting my farm to my son Josef. When she gained stronger health and children (all boys) were growing up and they were able to help, she bought our farm in November, 1956. I gave up

farming all together. Now we live with my wife in retirement not in town but in a nice cottage here on the farm." (9)

In 1906, Stanley Kostoryz purchased 7,700 acres of the old Rabb Ranch near Corpus Christi. He subdivided it, named it Bohemian Colony Lands and began advertising in Czech newspapers across the United States. In the fall of that year, five families settled there and by 1912, Kostoryz had purchased another 2,200 acres for further development. It is unclear how many Czechs moved in; some longtime residents claim the community was never the thriving center Kostoryz planned. Still, the area came to be identified as Czech and, in 1939, the name of the Catholic Church located on Kostoryz Street was changed from St. Boniface to Sts. Cyril and Methodius in honor of the first missionaries in Bohemia. With that rededication the wishes of Bishop Ledvina were fulfilled. In 1922, he had written, "I intend to make (a parish) exclusively Bohemian, and not combine it with a German congregation." (10)

When the Czechs moved south, they began to experience difficulties previously averted. In the Czech and German communities, the need for English was minimal; children went to schools in which lessons were taught in the European languages as well as English. The children learned some English but conversed in their "home language" more readily and easily. The schools they transferred to in Corpus Christi and Robstown taught English only and they had to learn quickly.

The head of the household, most often the father, worked frequently with store owners, grain dealers, county agents and other community people who spoke only English. He needed the language, used it often and was motivated to learn it. His wife, however, stayed on the farm, isolated to some degree except for Saturday visits to town. She did not need English to survive the

way her husband and children did. On the Saturday trips, her family translated for her and her social life centered around them and other Czech wives in the area. While she was, in a sense, cut off from the mainstream of American life, her isolation sustained Czech traditions and customs within the home.

The children, often born in the United States but speaking little English, attended school with non-Czech peers. The transition to English was difficult and they were often made fun of for their accents and pronunciations. Many Czech children suffered from name-calling and ethnic slurs. Such treatment made them embarrassed about their language, accents and any other accouterments that set them apart from the majority.

In time, the children learned English, adopted American customs, dress and idioms and the differences gradually diminished. Their parents, however, continued as before: their fathers spoke only enough English to survive in their businesses; their mothers spoke virtually none. The customs practiced in the home and the language spoken there were Czech and while the children honored the traditions, they were simultaneously embarrassed by them. Many of the children wanted to be like their "American" friends and they wanted their homes to be alike also. When they realized that their friends did not eat *kolaches* or speak a foreign language, they felt uncomfortable about inviting them to their homes.

Due mainly to the ridicule they experienced for being different, many Czech children grew away from their traditions. They concentrated on being "American" and excluded the old world customs. This took place gradually, but the end result was the same: many traditions were lost.

The disappearance of customs is as inevitable as it is unfortunate. Often traditions are built on need and customs evolve out of habit; when the need is gone or habit interrupted, they end. The immigrants adjusted to their new way of life in a new country and discovered that many of the old ways were no longer appropriate, useful or practical.

New ethnic associations emerged, however, and nurtured cultural ties.

The Catholic Church, a major element of culture in Czechoslovakia as well as America, was equally important to the Czechs in Texas. The *Katolicka Jednota Texaska*, Czech Catholic Union of Texas, was originally founded as an insurance organization in protest over the high interest rates being charged Texas farmers by northern companies. In addition to providing insurance and loans, K.J.T. encourages the study of Czech language and culture and provides assistance to the needy.

Similarly, *Slovanska Podporujici Jednota Statu Texas*, the Slavonic Benevolent Order of the State of Texas, is a fraternal insurance organization with lodges throughout the state. The S.P.J.S.T. has built retirement homes and supports the study of Czech language through scholarships at the University of Texas and at Texas A. & M. (11)

Sokol, meaning falcon, is a Czech youth organization that emphasizes physical training, such as sports and gymnastics, and Czech culture. Established in Prague in 1862, Sokol Halls began appearing in Texas in 1908.

All these organizations serve to strengthen the Czech heritage. While many of their members may never have been to Czechoslovakia, the ties with the homeland are still strong. As with other groups, Czechs have no desire to live anywhere but America, but wish to retain their legacies. Those who have visited Moravia or Bohemia often return with stories of the beauty of

the country and an understanding of why their parents or grandparents emigrated.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Hlavac, after visiting the village of his birth in Moravia, stated:

> *After we got home we were glad. Of course, it is beautiful there and everything, but we were glad to be back in America. We were thankful our parents had moved. I found that the people were nice and we got along real good. But for the living, we are glad we are here.* (12)

Mrs. Hlavac, nee Malik, was born of Czech parents who had arrived from Moravia. "Daddy was planning on going to America and leaving his brother there on the family property. My mother was an only child with a widowed mother, so they brought her mother with them. She didn't like it over there. She was poor and had to work in a sugar factory. The grandmother of my daddy was crying and my mother's mother said, 'Don't cry! We're going to a better land. We're going to have it better than it is here!' When my folks came, they were poor people."

"They came to Galveston and traveled on by train to Williamson County. When they got unloaded somewhere in a depot, my grandmother said, 'Oh, my God!' In those days, you didn't have towns, just a station. When we first came here (to Robstown), there was nothing but a sign. The train stopped there if you wanted to get off."

"They unloaded. A friend of Mother's from the same village was already here and was going to pick them up. My grandmother got out and said, 'Is this what America is?' She had her first sight--it was nothing but prairie. She had come from a village, all built-up country, and this was nothing but

prairie. Anyway, a man came and hauled them off in his wagon to Holland, Texas, in Bell County, and they stayed there."

"It was summer and hot. My mother picked cotton and my grandmother, too, and they didn't like it. Daddy said he was not going to pick cotton, that he was going to hunt or something. When November came, Daddy was picking pecans. There were lots so they made a living one year. Next year they started farming and I think we moved to Granger. My mother and daddy would work hard because my grandmother was baby sitting for us. She didn't like the country, but then she got used to it. Real courageous, she was. She wasn't like my mama. Mama would give in to everybody, but Grandmother stood up to anyone. She wasn't afraid to speak."

"In school we were 'Bohunks' and we were laughed at. Of course, we would cry. Some of the teachers were pretty mean. I guess they didn't really understand. We tried but we couldn't and so we were left behind or we were laughed at. After we learned, it was all right and everything was fine."

"After our folks were here several years, they got adjusted. And when the War broke out in Europe, they were glad they were here. My brother was old enough, eighteen, and he enlisted in World War I. It ended before he was ready to fight. Mother was always glad she was here. She didn't have anything good there. She said, 'It's freedom here,' and she was happy. She lived to be eighty-six years and she lived with us a year in this house. My daddy died kind of young, sixty-nine. He would always talk when he got a chance, and Mother would say, 'Behave! Whatever it is, it's for our own good and we have it good.'"

The impressions held by non-Czechs of the "Bohemians," as they were called, varied. In An American-Mexican Frontier, author Taylor relates

interviews held with ranchers, farmers and merchants of Nueces County. The opinions expressed indicate the range of attitudes held in the 1930s.

> *One of the most competent and observant Texan farmers commented on the differences between the American and the Bohemian and German farmers in the County; he commended the prosperous Bohemians and Germans as more active in management and in diversification, and added, 'A thousand (Bohemian and German) farmers would be the best thing for this County. It is true; the American farmers spend too much time in town.'* (13)

> *We prefer Mexicans to Bohemians; they (the Bohemians) work their women; they don't educate their children. They are pretty good farmers but they are clannish and not progressive and no advantage to the community. They will work hard and pay out their land, but there is no point of contact with them. They never learn English.*

> *The Mexicans? They don't work their children so hard, and we expect more of the Bohemians. The Bohemian has centuries of civilization behind him. The kind of Mexicans we have are of the low class...* (14)

> *A professional man of distinguished southern ancestry remarked:*

> *I am in favor of restricting immigration of 'Bohunks,' but not Mexicans. The Mexican makes a fair to middling good citizen and doesn't try to assimilate. The Bohunk wants to intermarry with the whites. Yes, they're white, but they're not our kind of white.* (15)

Outsiders often grouped Czechs with Germans but differences were realized within the two groups. Mark Majeck, a second-generation American of Czech descent, noted in an interview that his father was Czech, but his mother was German. While her father was a landowner from Violet, the Majecks were tenant farmers and relatively poor. "My grandfather did not like my mother going out with my dad, who was Czech. My grandfather called him 'A red-headed Bohemian.' But come hell or high water, she was going to marry him. So she did. It was very hard on her; I can't remember all the things, but I

know my grandfather was ugly to her. My aunt also married a Czech, but they were well-off. I think money probably had a lot to do with it, and their standing in the community."

"After the first child came and Daddy was there and showed that he was a good father, it didn't bother my grandfather anymore."

Mark Majeck's upbringing provided him with a strong sense of his Czech heritage even though the Czech community in South Texas is comparatively small. His paternal grandparents had immigrated in 1913 from Moravia and after landing in Galveston, they moved to Cameron. In the first years, they lost children to illness and led a mean existence before moving to Corpus Christi. There, they picked cotton and Mr. Majeck worked in a lumber yard for 50 cents a day. He also played the accordian for parties and weddings and taught his children to play. "They were all very musically inclined, and the older they got, the more music they played. If they could get anything, it was a musical instrument. They had a band and eventually my father joined. He was the youngest. All my uncles played in the band and, when they were down here from Cameron, my aunts played Czech music. My grandmother wrote a song about Cameron. Everything centered around music, but they played by ear, not by notes."

When Mark was a child, music was still an important part of every Czech gathering. "About the only thing that kept us together were the dances. That is the key to my heritage, and probably any Czech background: the dances. We learned to dance before we learned to walk. The polka and waltz, we knew those. And the music itself; they sing in Czech. My grandparents would be there and everything was in Czech."

"We'd go to festivals and we would see the traditional dances and the costumes, but as far as we were concerned, it was the music. Now I wouldn't take my kids to a Country and Western dance, but to a polka dance or a Majeck Dance as we called them, I would of course. We'd take a blanket and around ten or eleven o'clock, we'd all fall asleep on top of the table. And we'd sleep! That's how accustomed we were to the music. We could sleep while everyone else was dancing. And every place we went, we went as a family. That's another key for the Czech people -- the families. Everything centers around the family."

As a child, Mark learned Czech phrases in order to converse with his grandparents who spoke English haltingly. Overall, his parents were adamant that he speak English and Mark called that a "tragedy." When he entered the University of Texas, he enrolled in Czech language classes. After graduation in 1979, he went to Czechoslovakia to continue language and culture courses. In addition, he looked up his family's history in Berno, Moravia. "I didn't have enough material about what parish they had lived in before the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But I found books and books of Majecks. That was a common name. I thought, 'My God! A common name over there and here you can't find any!' The next time I go, I will have more information and be able to look them up."

The pride of heritage that many Czechs hold is not unique to that ethnic group, but the longevity of certain customs and the retention of the language is unusual. As was pointed out in the section on Mexicans, the retention of language is related to the steady arrival of immigrants who reinforce continued usage. When the flow stops, the use of the language fades. This has not been true of the Czechs. In Texas alone, there are 90,000 Czechs who

still converse in the language. (16) Nation-wide, the 1970 census figures show 450,000 Americans had been raised in homes where Czech was the primary language, but only 70,000 of them were immigrants; 150,000 were second generation.

There is no outstanding reason for the tenacity of the Czech language and the desire many Czech people have for being identified as American Czechs. Perhaps it is a result of the years of suppression in Europe and the effort required to maintain the culture under the Germans and Austrians. Whatever the reason, the Czechs have intensified the cultural bonds through an awareness of their heritage. There is a conscious effort to retain and pass down the legacy and their ethnic identity remains strong in spite of total acculturation.

The following was exerpted from A History of the Czech-Moravian Catholic Communities, translated by Rev. V. A. Svrcek in 1974 from a 1934 Czech publication. The syntax shows an essentially literal translation which reflects the structure of the original language.

Agua Dulce, Texas

Some 15 miles west of Robstown in Jim Wells County is the sprawling village of Agua Dulce. The country about is somewhat flat and rolling, fertile soil. One of the first Czech people here was J. C. Mrazek. His ingenuity and perseverance met with great success. Today, with his brother Thomas he owns shares in two large and modern cotton gins. Here he owns an automobile business and another in another locality with a partner. In 1913, more Czech people arrived. Bartholomew Zurovec, who died only a few years ago, and his sons, Isidor and Frank are still here. In 1915, arrived J. Zapalac; in 1921, Frank J. Prochazka, in 1922, Karel Spicak and Ludwig Zurovec. In 1923, John

Sablatura, Antonin Ermis, and M. Levek. In 1925, came Vaclav Podest; in 1928, Peter Repka, Joseph Kaspar, and Bohumil Bubenik. In 1931, Alois Raska, his brother Paul and Frank Krkoska; in 1932, Joseph Bolom, Vinc Stastny, and Esterak. In 1934, came Ludwig Mikulec. All these people attended church in Corpus Christi, some 31 miles away. When a church was later built in Robstown, they attended there. Some time later, though the number of families was still rather small, they decided to build a church of their own. Mr. J. C. Mrazek donated the necessary land. The first meeting for that purpose was held the first Sunday in January, 1934, called by John Sablatura. At this meeting, Father F. J. Kasper, pastor of the Czech parish SS. Cyrill & Methodius Church in Corpus Christi, was also present. Some parishioners, at this meeting, placed down ready cash moneys and others made very generous donation pledges. J. C. Mrazek, John Sablatura and Karel Spicak were elected to petition the Most Reverend Bishop Ledvina of Corpus Christi for permission to form this parish and erect a church. This permission was graciously granted by the Most Reverend Bishop. Mr. W. B. Ebner, and Stanley Prochazka were elected in addition to the three above mentioned to constitute the Building Committee. They collected some $1,200 and construction on the new church began January 30, 1934. The church was blessed April 15, 1934, by Msgr. J. J. Lannon, delegated by the Bishop to bless the church. The church was dedicated to St. Francis, in memory of Mrs. Frances Mrazek, deceased wife of Mr. J. C. Mrazek. On this occasion a new bell was blessed also. First Mass in this new church was celebrated by Father F. J. Kasper, who then for some time alternated with Father Jiri (George) Scecina, pastor of Robstown. The first Baptism in the parish records is Jarolim Peter, first-born son of Peter Podest. Some 30 souls belong to this parish.

The church building cost about $3,600 in addition to the manual labor and hauling of building materials donated by the zealous parishioners. At present, the parish is free of debt and some more landed property was acquired for a rectory and school. The Altar Society of St. Frances donated all the necessary linens and vestments for the church.

On October 21, 1934, a branch of the K.J.T. was organized with the help of A. J. Kallus, president and W. J. Janecka, secretary of the supreme office and Pauline Peter, secretary of the K.J.Z.T., being present. At this time Mr. and Mrs. Karel, and Emilie Spicak were awarded a Cross of Merit for having given four sons and five daughters to these two societies.

Farming around Agua Dulce is carried on a large scale. Most of the land is owned by people living in town and cities and the lands are leased out. Of the Czech people, Antonin Ermis owns some 350 acres; his neighbor Joseph Stuchly owns 300 acres, and to this day his wife Mrs. Winnie Stuchly is a very active member of the community and the parish.

In 1928, a seminarian, Henry Psencik had been teaching catechism during summer vacation time. Presently, Father Henry Psencik is in Inez, Texas.

At the beginning of 1939, a new Catholic Hall was erected. All manual labor was donated by the parishioners. John Sablatura supervised the work. The builder was I. B. Vrana from Robstown.

Alice, Texas

Alice is a little village situated some 11 miles west of Agua Dulce, seat of Jim Wells County. The first Czech people came here in 1913. They were Klement A. Peter and Jan Yurek. They settled on Scott Ranch and in time they moved away. At one time Mrs. Pavlina Peter, daughter of Marie (Jan) Yurek was the head secretary of K.J.Z.T. and lived for a long number of years

in Yoakum. Her mother, Mrs. Marie Yurek, had for a number of years been the supreme president of K.J.Z.T. then living in Shiner.

In 1915 came John A. Rohan, who bought 80 acres of land, selling this later, and instead bought a small 25-acre tract. Later in that same year came Josef Sevcik who also bought an 80-acre farm. As time went on, he bought more and more land and after 20 years time he owned 330 acres of land and a very beautiful home. About in 1937, he sold out everything and moved out to Runnels County where he owned, in Miles, Texas, a cotton gin. John Janca also bought some uncultivated land, now owned by their sons. Later two single men came, they were Emil and Arnost Hajek. They, however, after a year's stay, moved away. Both of the Hajeks moved to Shiner where they acquired a meat processing business. The same year a tornado destroyed the Catholic Church, Father Canales was the paster then.

After the destruction of the church, services were held in the rectory. About four times a year Father Joseph Klobouk came here from Corpus Christi to say Mass and administer sacraments to the Czech people. In 1917, the church was rebuilt and Father Klobouk was transferred to Needville, Texas, but no Czech priest came to serve the Czech people.

In 1917, Thomas Jaresh arrived in Alice, in 1921, Vilem Schodek, and J. Kulcak, who owned a restaurant, in 1922, Josef Kalinec, and in 1923, Ludwig Olsovsky, who died in 1936. In 1936, a branch of K.J.Z.T. was founded with eleven members.

Beeville, Texas

Beeville, seat of Bee County, is situated in a sprawling rolling prairie country some 48 miles from Corpus Christi on the San Antonio-Corpus Christi Highway. There is nothing known about the beginnings of this city until the

year 1885 when the San Antonio-Aransas Pass Railroad was built. Today there are about 6,000 citizens here. The first Czech Moravian settler was a shoemaker, Mr Slavicek whose son now lives in Brownsville, Texas. In 1889 brothers Stephen and Valentine Kubala settled here. In the former days Valentine helped to drive cattle through here from Wharton to Live Oak Counties when he heard that it was possible to acquire landed properties here as much as they wished, for merely paying the expenses of a deed and ownership papers.

This part of the country was noted for lack of rains. After Mr. Kubala came Jan Barton, August Gallia, Frank Hrcek, Peter Blazi and some few more families. In a very short time settled around Beeville and Olmus some 40 families, Catholic and Czech. Due to a two year draught and failure of crops, most of the Czech families moved out and only seven families remained. A year later Valentine Kubala moved out also. But after two years he returned and bought several hundred acres of land near the town. When Stephen moved in, he at once bought a very large tract of land and kept buying more. He cleared the land and leased out what he could. Later he bought a small tract of land near the city built a nice home and planted a beautiful orchard. He died in 1938 at the age of 84 years. His younger brother Valentine lived also near the city in retirement. All of his children were well taken care of.

In 1896 a church was built in Beeville and the church at Olmus was closed. In 1933 a new church was built in Beeville and dedicated to St. Joseph.

In 1889 a school was built together with a home for the teaching sisters of Incarnate Word of San Antonio. They are teaching here to the present day. There are an average of 65 children in attendance.

In 1900 came Peter Mikeska and opened a food business. Later he married a daughter of Stephen Kubala, now living in retirement. At the same time came a jeweler and watchmaker Karel Swab from Shiner, Texas. He is still engaged in that for him prosperous business. His brother, A. V. Swab, manages a well running hotel, the "Kohler." Mr. Sladek owns a store with school supplies and cold drinks near the school. John Nedbalek is mail carrier. Jindrich (Henry) Mikeska owns a laundry. Orsak is a building contractor. Ed Kubala is a butcher and Joseph Matejek works in a department store. Out on a farm we find Karel Peter, son of the immortal and well known Karel Peter, the accountant for many years of the K.J.T. Also in the community lived Vincent and Lidmila Sugarek and mother, as well as Albert Alfons and Vilem Kubala.

Corpus Christi, Texas

The City of Corpus Christi, seat of Nueces County, has a population of about 35,000 without suburbs. The city was a port already in 1850 though only for smaller vessel traffic. But since 1929 the port has been improved to the amount of several million dollars so that now even large boats can enter. Since then the city has grown by leaps and bounds. Today we find a number of skyscrapers dotting the skyline. In 1929 oil was found in the vicinity and today seven producing wells dot the fields.

In 1912 Corpus Christi became a Diocesan See with the Most Reverend Nusbaum as the first resident Bishop. He presided until 1918.

Mr. S. L. Kostohryz moved here from Wilber, Nebraska. He bought some 8,000 acres of land about 7 miles from the city. He divided this into 80 acre farms and set out for the North for prospective buyers. Mr. Kostohryz can be considered as the founder of the Czech population hereabouts.

In 1905 Joseph Oujezdsky and his brother-in-law John Brandejsky from Bryan visited here. Mr. Brandejsky was able to speak German fluently and gained the faith of Mr. Frank Kress and many other German people settled here. Through this friendly alliance he bought land for about $12.00 an acre. In July, 1906 he moved here permanently and built a small house for himself and started farming his land. It was a disappointment for him how few Czech families followed him here. There were here at this time Alois Cech, Mr. Hajny, a widowed elderly man. In autumn of that year Frank Kocurek came from Ellinger, Adolph Rohan from Yorktown, Fred Polasek and Mr. Zezula from Granger and Jacob Koblizek from Cameron. Also Mr. Kruka and his son, immigrant Czechs from Poland and Mathew Rozsypal now living in St. Paul, Texas.

The German Catholics of this community had planned to build a church but the Czech people did not go for the idea mainly because the Czech people from the North wanted the church for the Czech people only. This was principally an idea of Mr. Brandejsky himself. Thus the German catholics built a church for themselves with a rectory. They dedicated the parish to St. Boniface. The land was donated by Frank Kress. The first pastor was Father Ferdinand Gaebel, the only German priest in the diocese. He had been for some 20 years an assistant at the Irish Catholic Church in Corpus Christi. Father Gaebel served also for the Czech people and very frequently said Holy Mass in the home of Mr. Brandejsky so that the Czech people could avail themselves of the graces of the Sacraments of the Church. The first Czech marriage performed by Father Gaebel was that of John Janosec and Miss Andela Brandejsky, daughter of John Brandejsky, in whose home the marriage was performed. A second marriage in the community also performed by Father Gaebel

was in the St. Boniface Catholic Church, that of Karel Kosarek and a second daughter of John Brandejsky. After a one year stay in this community Father Gaebel lost his life in a fire of unknown origin destroying the rectory.

In 1913 Father Joseph Klobouk came to this parish and he labored here until July, 1918. During his stay a new rectory was built and through his efforts the German and Czech people shook hands and became one parish with 27 families. Then came the families of John Malchar, Alois Wolf, Frank Malchar, Alois Motal, Anton Fritz, John Janosec Sr., Joe Ermis, Karel Batrak, Kaspar Zdansky, John Wolf, and Andrew Pospech. During Father Klobouk's time, the K.J.T. and K.J.Z.T. Societies were organized in January, 1914.

In 1914 came the family of Rudolph Polasek, and a year later Leo Netek, Fabian Pavelka, Vince Brezna and Frank Slezinger all of them from Corn Hill in Williamson County.

In 1916 a Gulf hurricane badly damaged the church and it was then moved to a new location and repaired. In its former location they built a parish hall which later was remodeled into a school. The years of 1916-17 were very difficult years for Father Klobouk and his parishioners because of the damages by the hurricane and a severe drought. The year 1916 was really a total crop loss. The following year was not too much better. Father Joseph Klobouk left in 1918 and there was no resident priest until 1922.

Mr. Songin Folda can be given much credit for the then fast growth of this community. He bought the Kostohryz Ranch, cleared the land, built a number of small houses and leased or sold to the Czech people as much as they wished. He died in 1923. His son Lamar Folda took over the management of these properties following his father's idea with great success. In 1918 came Rudolph Taichman, John Serek, and Frank Krnavka. The families of

Stojanik, Chasak, Hybner and later, about in 1922 came Ludwig Mokry, Karel Batek, Joacob Nemec and others. In the absence of a priest, the parish was visited by Father Kuratko and L. P. Netardus. These priests had taught catechism and said Mass in the Irish church. The closed rectory was rented for $10 a month to Alois Motal.

At the departure of Father Klobouk there was a parish debt of $700 so Alois Motal and J. Yurek made rounds of the Czech and German parishioners and collected the amount to erase the debt.

In 1920 the Most Reverend Bishop Emmanuel Ledvina became Bishop of the Corpus Christi Diocese. He had the church repaired in 1921 at a cost of $5,000 and in 1922 Father Frank Cerny was appointed pastor. He stayed here a year during which time the parish grew up to 35 families. Then came Father F. E. Walsh, Irish by birth. During his time statues of Ss. Cyrill and Methodius were bought and the parish was named Ss. Cyrill & Methodius Church.

After Father Walsh came Father Henry Richard, German by birth. In 1926 came Father Joseph Leben. During his administration the parish made wonderful strides forward, the church was remodeled and enlarged and decorated. Father Rehor, conducted a very successful mission. Father Leben celebrated here his Silver Jubilee of ordination. By this time the parish numbered some 65 families. Father Leben then took sick and died in the North in 1929.

Father F. J. Kasper took over the pastorship. Though not of Czech birth, he speaks the Czech language fluently. The parish at this time counts some 100 families. A mission by the Benedictine Fathers of Chicago was conducted. The Altar Society was organized.

Mr. Kaspar Zdansky leased one-half acre of land for 50 years to a group of people and they built a hall for the use of the societies and the parish.

In 1939 the hall was rebuilt and enlarged and was dedicated on August 20, 1939. The first officers of the lodge "Moravan" were President Leo Netak, Secretary, Rudolph Polasek, Treasurer, Kaspar Sdansky. Later were added Vinc Brezina, Joseph Brandejsky, Ludwig Mokry and Jacob Nemec.

On May 8, 1937 Father Jullius Petru celebrated his first Holy Mass in this parish. He was born in Marak, Texas and grew up in Shiner, Texas.

Kingsville, Texas

One of the most modern and most known cities in southwestern Texas is Kingsville. It is situated on the Missouri Pacific Railroad. Kingsville has large railroad yards. The city was founded by a Mr. Kleberg, in 1904 and was named after his father-in-law, Lt. Richard King who owned over one million acres of land on which this city is located. Some four miles to the north is the well known Santa Gertrudis Cattle Ranch, where Mr. King lived. Later Mr. Kleberg becoming an heir to these vast properties, built himself a home costing one million dollars.

The City was incorporated in 1911 and became the County Seat. Its Court House is one of the most elaborate in the state.

The first Catholic church was built in 1908. The priest lived in a small house attached to the rear of the church. John Novak with his wife (nee M. Smykal) came from Hallettsville, owned a hotel in the city. He boarded the priest. There lived also at this time a Czech, tailor by profession. Two brothers named Kubicek, who conducted an amusement concession. Mathew Novak brother of John Novak acquired in 1909, 160 acres of land. There are presently some 75 Catholic families, 14 of these are Czech Moravian, they are scattered here and there. Among these families are, Mrs. Anna Horak; J. L. Faltejka; Henry Andrews (Jindrich Ondrej), and Jaroslav Lukastik.

Orange Grove, Texas

Some 40 miles northwest of Corpus Christi, Texas on the main highway from Skidmore to the Rio Grande Valley, is the neat little village of Orange Grove. It is said that the name came from the fact that one of the first settlers around the year of 1908 had planted some oranges and lemon trees around the house. These had grown very fast and brought abundant crops of fruit. Thus the locality had been spoken about as the place with the Orange Grove, hence Orange Grove, Texas. The next owner Max Schubert, son-in-law of Joseph Sigmund, planted some two acres in oranges. These trees also did very well -- but with the first frost, all the trees froze. Now the settler did not plant oranges anymore. The tourists now wonder how did the place get its name since there are no signs anywhere of any orange trees.

The first settlers, Catholics, attended church at Corpus Christi or Falfurrias. In 1913 a church was built at Orange Grove, and a priest came from Falfurrias or from Alice, Texas. Today the settlement has some 100 Catholic families about one-third are Czech-Moravians. Later the church was enlarged and a priest's home was built. The first resident pastor was Father Frank Kasper. He was assisted by Father Heligan. Now Father J. G. Hoalman is stationed here.

Robstown, Texas

The vicinity of Robstown, in Nueces County had been chosen by Czech people to migrate to in the year of 1907. At a time where Robstown is now -- there was a large building that served for a supply store, restaurant, and hotel. The owner was August Kuehn. In 1907 arrived Tom Mrazek from Williamson County. Later two brothers settled there, Frank and Stanislav Prochazka from Fayette County. John Rektorik from Lavaca. It is not known where did

Mr. Docekal came from. In 1908 came John Veselka from Fayette, Louis Rektorik from Lavaca. Tom Stanek in 1909 from Williamson County. Also Joseph Grossman and his son-in-law, Mrazek.

In 1911 came Adolph Berkovsky; Paul Hafernik; Anthony Zitu; Peter Schanel; in 1913 Bartholomew Zurovetz. In 1915 Joseph Hlavinka; Anthony Fritz; J. Fabrygel. In 1917 Joseph Stuchly settled near Bishop, Texas and in 1920 he moved to Robstown, Texas. In 1918 came Frank Tomecek and John Blahuta. In 1920 Rudolph Hrncir. In 1921 I. B. Vrana; Jaro Rektorik. In 1922 Anton Charba; Melichar Prochazka; Frank Cunda; L. H. Cykala; 1923 Fr. W. Prasifka; F. J. Moravek; Joseph Mikulek and John Kocurek. In 1924 W. J. Roeder; Frank Hlavac; John Ermis; Frank Nemec; John Juranek; John Marek. In 1928 Rochus Malik and Henry Koliba. Brothers Adolph and John Marek and J. F. Malchar were among the first settlers.

Just about all of the first settlers bought uncultivated lands, with heavy underbrush. It was very difficult and heavy work to clear the lands, but the present state of the farms shows that their efforts have met with wonderful success. A Mr. T. Mrazek had invented a special kind of plow that proved very useful and is in use even at the present time.

It was in 1923 that Father Joseph Klobouk came to Corpus Christi and visited in Robstown travelling the 25 miles with a team. On his visits he said Holy Mass in the house of Frank Prochazka. For two years he came here once a month. Then the parishioners built a small frame church on the land of Anton Fritz. This church was destroyed by a severe storm August 16, 1916. After that Father Klobouk said Mass in a German church at Violet, Texas and later in the Mexican church in Robstown. In 1918 Father Klobouk left Robstown and Father John Walsh, an Irish priest came to serve the people. In 1922

Father Frank Cerny came from Nebraska -- he also attended the Robstown church and taught the children catechism. Within a year he returned to Nebraska, where shortly after he died. Father J. Walsh returned to Corpus Christi.

By the year of 1924 conditions had changed for the better. The people had saved some money and much travel was by automobiles. In 1924 came Father Henry Richards -- at this time an older Methodist church was bought and was dedicated to St. John Nepomucenus. In 1923 Father Joseph Leben came to Corpus Christi -- a Slovenian missionary-priest. Father Leben stayed here some 4 years, he had taken ill and was moved to Wisconsin hospital where after two years he died.

Thereafter came from Corpus Christi Benedictine Fathers: Thomas; Phillip; and Joseph. In 1930 at the beginning of the month of October Father F. J. Kasper came to Corpus Christi, though a Hungarian, he spoke Czech fluently. He came to Robstown for the next 3 years. On the 12th of July, 1934 came Father Scecina from Indiana, he became the first resident pastor in Robstown. There are some 57 families in Robstown today -- 35 Czech.

In 1924 the K.J.T. and the K.J.Z.T. societies were organized as also the Altar Society and the K.D. = (Katolicky Delnik-Catholic Workman).

Presently Robstown counts about 5,000 souls. There is a cotton gin owned by W. J. Roeder; Rudolph Mrazek, blacksmith shop; Frank Fritz owns a garage; I. B. Vrana a building contractor and with him is Leo Kollaja; Anton Mrazek is a mechanic; F. V. Prasifka real estate; Frank Michna works for Ford Motors, Frank Kubala manager of a cotton gin; Victor Zapalac oilfield worker; G. A. Balzer clothing and grocery store.

By this time the church began to be too small so it was decided to build a new church building. Ground was broken April, 1937 and the building was

dedicated October 17, 1937 to the honor of St. John Nepomucenus by the Most Reverend Bishop E. B. Levina D.D., LL.D. Bishop of Corpus Christi, Texas.

Skidmore, Texas

This little town of some 1,500 souls is situated out on the open prairie between Beeville and Corpus Christi, Texas. There are some 30 Czech Catholic families settled here. A small church was built in 1896 and dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. Most of the settlers are German. The first Czechomoravians to have moved here were John Miculka, coming from Flatonia and Vincent Doubrava from Yoakum in 1889. The soil here is very fertile if there is enough rain. Cotton does very good. Mr. Doubrava bought some 300 acres of land for $2,100.00 near the settlement of Olmus. He bought this from Jakub Vackar. Presently he and his wife, Nee Nacha, lives in Skidmore, Texas. Joseph Rusek came even before Mr. Miculka. Rusek was killed by a mad bull. Later came Peter Blazi; Thomas Marcak; Frank Hrcek and Mr. Faktor and later Peter and Frank Janca.

Taft, Texas

The town of Taft, was founded by the brother of a former president of the United States, Charles Taft. It spreads out on a flat country some 20 miles northeast of Corpus Christi. In addition to other business matters Charles Taft built a slaughter house where cattle and hogs were processed for the market. After some years the yards closed down.

The first Catholic Church in Taft was built in 1915 and dedicated to the Holy Family. In 1928 a new church building was erected. There were 16 Czech Catholic families.

Mr. Svadlenak owns a grocery store; other Czech Catholic families settled here; Joseph Drozd, with his family and his parents, Emet Cervenka; John Ondrusek and Chvatal. (17)

ENDNOTES: CZECHS

[1] Phil Hewitt, ed., Czechs in Texas (Institute of Texan Cultures, 1972), p. 4.

[2] Stephen Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 263.

[3] Joseph S. Roucek, The Czechs and Slovaks in America (Lerner Publications Company, 1967), p. 22.

[4] Stephen Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 262.

[5] Ibid, p. 263.

[6] Ibid, p. 263.

[7] Phil Hewitt, ed., Czechs in Texas (Institute of Texan Cultures, 1972), p. 5.

[8] Paul Schuster Taylor, An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas (University of North Carolina Press, 1934; reprint ed., New York: Russell and Russell, 1971), pp. 84-5.

[9] Msgr. Joseph C. Kunc, "Memoirs of My Life: According to Memories of Francis Hlavac", English translation by M. J. Chvatal (Typewritten)

[10] Rev. Patrick Higgins, History of Our Parish, letter to parishioners, 1977.

[11] Phil Hewitt, ed., Czechs in Texas, (Institute of Texan Cultures, 1972), p. 20.

[12] Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Joe Hlavac, Robstown, Texas, November 22, 1980.

[13] Paul Schuster Taylor, An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas (University of North Carolina Press, 1934; reprint ed., New York: Russell and Russell, 1971), p. 89.

[14] Ibid, p. 287.

[15] Ibid, p. 302.

[16] Stephanie Bernardo, The Ethnic Almanac (Garden City, New York: Dolphin Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981), p. 93.

[17] Rev. V. A. Surcek, A History of the Czech-Moravian Catholic Communities of Texas (Texian Press, Waco, Texas; 1974, from Nase Dejiny, Nasinec Publishing Co., Granger, Texas; 1939), pp. 1-186.

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German: Since English is based to a large degree on German, there are numerous borrowings. There are also expressions that have become common in recent years that are translations of ones in German. The word *gesundheit* is obviously a German word but its manner of introduction is odd: It was used in the 1940 film Pinocchio and gained national attention. Since then, it has become a common way of blessing someone after they sneeze. The American expression 'so long' is actually a mispronunciation of the German *so lange*, meaning good-bye. 'Talking a blue streak' comes from the German expression meaning 'to chatter the blue from the skies.'

After language, the greatest German contribution is food: pumpernickel bread, zwieback, pretzels, beer, sausage and potatoe dumplings. Although sauerkraut is a German word, the dish originated in China. The all-American hamburger was based on a steak German immigrants introduced. The bun was a result of running out of plates during the sale of the ground beef at the 1904 St Louis Fair.

One of the most important contributions to beef production was made by the South Texas descendant of German immigrants, Robert Kleberg. He developed the Santa Gertrudis breed of cattle, noted for their ability to withstand heat and produce quality meat. After twenty years of crossbreeding, the Santa Gertrudis were recognized as the first American breed.

Besides bringing their own foods, the Germans invented new ones when they arrived in America. In San Antonio, immigrant Gebhardt was the inventor of chili powder, unknown to cooks in Mexico, and the first to can chile con carne. The company he founded is so well-known in South Texas that few think about the German name on Mexican food products.

Throughout Texas, there are yearly celebrations of German culture, usually called Wurstfests. They are based on the Oktoberfest in Germany and feature food, beer and music. The om-pah-pah bands, endemic in German settlements, greatly influenced Mexican musicians who

borrowed the beat for their regional music referred to as Norteño.

from The Ethnic Almanac

Since 1683, German immigrants have been an important segment of the United States' population, and their influence on American values and culture was extensive. Conversely, as an ethnic group the Germans are virtually invisible today. Their acculturation was due to the early arrival of the group and settlement patterns which insured their assimilation.

Germantown, Pennsylvania was established in 1683 by William Penn and thirteen Quaker families who came to America seeking religious freedom. Although these immigrants and their descendants came to be called the Pennsylvania Dutch, they were actually from the Palatinate region of southwestern Germany. In those years, the word "Dutch"* was given to all people living between the mouth of the Rhine River and Switzerland. (2)

By 1709, 13,000 more Palatines had arrived in America, driven out of Germany by high taxes, overpopulation, the war of Louis XIV, and a severe winter. (3)

The immigrants settled and began advertising their need for workers in America. Since many of the Germans were poor and unable to afford the cost of a transatlantic trip, they became "redemptioners." (4) They could pay for the voyage within two weeks of arrival or "sell themselves into servitude for a fixed period to cover the cost of their passage; four years was a common term." (5)

* "The terms Pennsylvania Dutch and Pennsylvania German are Americanisms; Dutch is derived from an older English usage of Deutsch..." (1)

While there were a number of groups motivated by the prospect of religious freedom, such as the Mennonites and Baptist Dunkers, most of these early Germans were Protestant farmers who came for the possibility of buying land. Their religious beliefs tended to direct their settlement: "The sectarians settled close to Philadelphia, while Lutheran and Reformed immigrants who came later carved out farms farther north and west." (6) Nonetheless, nearly all were farmers and they became noted for their methods.

> *Germans enjoyed a reputation as industrious, frugal, and skilled farmers who cared more for their land and livestock than for their own comfort, but during the colonial period they were not noticeably more wealthy than other farmers; their discipline and mutual aid, however, brought greater than average prosperity to the sectarians.* (7)

In the 1700s, German immigrants began making important contributions to the American lifestyle. In 1714, Christopher Dock introduced chalkboards as a teaching aid. In 1733, John Peter Zenger, publisher of the New York Weekly Journal newspaper, was sued for libel after criticizing the British governor. After showing that he had only printed the truth, Zenger was acquitted and a precedent for freedom of the press was established. (8)

A school system, providing instruction in German, emerged in the mid-1700s and helped to reinforce German identity. These schools, mostly parochial, provided an alternative to the "charity schools" which taught in English. (9) Education was valued and the literacy rate was high: between 1732 and 1800, there were thirty-eight German newspapers. (10)

By the time of the American Revolution, there were over 225,000 Germans in America, constituting ten percent of the total population. (11) Although

immigration virtually halted during the War, assimilation did not and by the late 1700s, Germans were using English in their business and church records and Anglicizing their names. (12) When the next major wave of German immigration came in 1825 (13), the first group had begun moving out of the German settlements and heading south and west to new regions.

The Napoleonic Wars and continuing economic problems caused the second wave and by 1900, five million Germans were in the United States. In his unpublished thesis, German Immigration to Texas and their Contribution to Architecture, Nestor Infanzon points out that the Industrial Revolution in Europe, which eliminated many jobs, was also a cause for emigrating. In some German states, however, emigration was considered a traitorous act and it was difficult if not impossible for people to leave with any capital or goods. Selling off everything caused suspicion; arriving with nothing meant years of servitude. Nonetheless, emigration was considered the only chance for success as the problems in Germany increased.

Overall, German immigration displayed patterns that were different from other ethnic groups. While most of the immigrants were poor farmers, many wealthy, professional people also arrived. This was especially true after the Napoleonic War when taxes were raised to pay off debts. The wealthy and well-educated German immigrants usually settled in cities and very often became influential members of the community. Their acculturation was usually rapid.

In 1838, Industry, Texas was founded, the first German settlement in the state. Friedrich Ernst planned to establish a cigar factory, providing employment for immigrants, and advertised abroad. He is considered "The

Father of German Immigration in Texas" and encouraged many of his countrymen to emigrate. (14)

One of those Germans influenced by Ernst's letters and advertisements was Robert Justus Kleberg, a lawyer in Westphalia. With a group of immigrants, Kleberg left Germany in 1834. They were shipwrecked near Galveston but eventually made it to the Ernst and Fordtran community where Kleberg settled on a league of land. The town is today known as Cat Springs. Before his death in 1888, Kleberg had gained the reputation as a leading rancher. His son, Robert Justus, Jr., married Alice Gertrudis, the daughter of Capt. Richard King, and managed King Ranch after the Captain's death. The contributions that Kleberg and his son, R. J. III, made to the ranching industry of South Texas are extensive: the discovery of an artesian belt underlying much of the region; the planning of the railroad between Corpus Christi and Brownsville; the improvement of native grasses and; the development of the first American breed of cattle, the Santa Gertrudis. (15)

At the turn of the century, there was a concerted effort to attract settlers to South Texas, especially farmers. As noted in the section on the Czechs, some of the large ranches were sold at that time and subdivided for farming. While advertisements continued to be issued abroad, notices were also placed in American newspapers and attracted Germans who had been in the States a number of years. In some cases, the ads were directed to particular organizations, such as the Catholic Colonization Society of America, so that they would aid in bringing immigrants. The town of Vattmann in Kleberg County was settled in 1908 by land developer Theodore Koch and Rev. Edward J. Vattmann through the Catholic organization; the first family to arrive were the Mays from Westphalia. Soon, other German families from Michigan

migrated down. The church was completed by 1909, and until 1916, plans existed for making Vattmann a commercial center. In that year, however, a severe hurricane destroyed the entire town. Work began immediately on another church to be built of bricks made by local residents from the sand of Baffin Bay. The church was dedicated in 1920 and soon the community had built a parochial school. In 1937, the church was redone and stained glass windows from Germany were installed. The church, Our Lady of Consolation, still stands in the small community and, some claim, represents the tenacity and dedication of South Texas Germans. (16)

Another South Texas German community, Violet, was founded in 1910 through the efforts of John W. Hoelscher. He had arrived from Westphalia in 1908 and purchased land between Corpus Christi and Robstown. The original name of Land Siding came from landowner Charlie Land and the platform for train passengers or the rail siding. Later, some people called the town "Bush;" the current name became official in 1920. John Fester, a German storekeeper and owner of the cotton gin, named the town for his wife. (17)

Hoelscher, a Catholic, wanted to attract other German Catholics to the area and worked with Rev. Goebels and Msgr. Peter Verdaguer to establish St. Anthony Mission. In the fall of 1910, building on the church and school started; the church was completed the following year at a total cost of $655.50. (18)

St. Anthony's Church did not have a resident pastor; Rev. Goebels would travel from St. Boniface Parish in Corpus Christi to celebrate Mass one Sunday a month. In February, 1911, the rectory at St. Boniface burned and Rev. Goebels was killed. Since that time, the congregation at St. Anthony's has been served by visiting priests from Robstown and Corpus Christi. (19)

The Kircher family of Violet is typical of the German-Americans who migrated to South Texas in the early 1900s. David Kircher is the great, great grandson of Thomas Schwab who emigrated with Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels and helped settle New Braunfels, Texas.

David's mother came to Violet in 1924 with her brother. They managed the general store and post office which, in later years, were moved to the Kircher farm. David has maintained the store and post office as a museum and preserved many of the tools, utensils and items sold there over the years. He has also been instrumental in restoring the original St. Anthony's Church.

David's father, John, came to Violet when he was seven years old. John's mother had asthma and her doctor had recommended a coastal climate. The family farmed 180 acres of cotton, vegetables and livestock.

The first years were difficult, both economically and emotionally: there were tensions between Germans and Czechs, due in great part to their experiences in Europe (see Czechs); during World War I, there was suspicion of local Germans and their supposed loyalty to the homeland. Corpus Christian Thoeodore Fuller, in his memoirs When the Century and I Were Young, (unpublished), recalled the sentiment during the war years.

"In 1917 Miss Jean Mateer taught the second grade at David Hirsh School. She was probably in her late twenties. At least she was older than pretty Miss Gunter who had taught my first grade at Edward Furman."

"Miss Jean was pretty, too. (I wonder if little girls think their teachers are as pretty as do little boys). But over-riding all other attributes and qualifications, Miss Jean had seen the Kaiser."

"The U. S. equivalent of a propaganda ministry must have done an admirable job. From the sinking of the Lusitania onward, the Kaiser seems to have been on a tailspin to perdition. Thinking adults may have rationalized somewhat but Satan himself could in no way have been more despicable to a second grader."

"Miss Jean had been on a tour of Europe. The small wooden shoes tied together and hanging on the west wall of the schoolroom bore tangible witness to her visit to the land of tulips, windmills and little Dutch boys who could save the dikes by plugging holes with fingers."

"But the Kaiser! She had stood right on the curb as he passed in a carriage flanked by peaked-helmetted uhlans with gleaming lances. She had a postcard picture of such a procession which she let us come up two at a time to see. Why hadn't she shot him then and there? asked some child."

"I understood her explanation that we were not then at war and couldn't know that the Kaiser was, underneath the resplendant uniform, really a bad man. I also knew that she could not have had a gun beside her while watching a procession. But I did wonder why the Lord could not have given some more likely assassin the powers of foresight."

"Miss Jean Mateer had another asset. She was French. At least, my parents said her name was a French one and that was good enough for me. They may have suggested that some lone Hugenot ancestor of two hundred years before could possibly have furnished the only French genes. To me she was French and therefore somehow, noble."

"The next year, 1918, found patriotism even more strong. We were by then in the third grade and Miss Pearl Bauerfein was our teacher. There were patriotic parades in which all school children marched. Military

uniforms were common on the streets. Beyond this and the singing of patriotic songs, there was more ominous evidence of war. Machine gun target practice was being conducted within earshot."

"The machine guns were no more than a quarter of a mile west of David Hirsh School. Their rattle was incessant for minutes at a time. The targets were on a peninsula in Nueces Bay probably a thousand yards further away. We were in a west, upstairs room of the building but recess time or a sneaked peek on the way to the boys room revealed no troops, only the targets."

"I tried to picture Germans crawling about where those tiny squares stood on the flat marshy ground. They deserved every one of those bullets. A quarter of a century later after a spate of German bullets had cracked around me I found myself with a whimsically ironic thought: it was like Nueces Bay but did I deserve one of those slugs?"

"At the front of the room, above the blackboard, were pictures of Foch, King Albert, Haig and Pershing. I think Woodrow Wilson was centered above them but as a hatless civilian, he made no great impression on me. In times when I had better things to do, I spent many hours copying small scratch-paper minatures of the famous military men. I spent more time with King Albert and Marshal Foch; the scrambled eggs around their caps fascinated me."

"If the Kaiser were satan personified, the Germans who followed him were surely beasts. There was a wartime film, The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin, which assured us of the fact. What about Germans who were in Corpus? Emil Ludewig, in my grade, was a German. So was Miss Pearl Bauerfein. That was something else. Emil was one of the crowd of boys with whom I walked home

every day. Everybody said his parents spoke English with a German accent. Well, that made no difference. They were really Americans."

"And Miss Pearl was the fastest knitter among all our teachers. Not only simple mufflers but real sleeveless sweaters came off her flying needles to go on some cold, shivering soldier."

"Besides, Germans were mean, while over-weight, rosy cheeked Miss Pearl was one of the happiest grown-ups I knew. She liked everybody and everybody liked her. She was no real German." (20)

As the newcomers settled in and became part of the community, the problems eased. There was no display of animosity toward local Germans during World War II. (21)

In 1882, Frederick and Christiana Poenisch arrived in Texas with their children Ernest, Robert, Frank and Lena. The history of the family, written by their descendants Daisy Bowen, Eda Lee, Elsie Poenisch, Christi Peterson and Harriet Tillman, "is also an integral part of the history of Corpus Christi." (22) Intended as a family chronicle, the history is included here as an example of one family's celebration of their heritage and to show the realities of life encountered by the German immigrants to South Texas.

BEGINNINGS IN AMERICA

Frederick and Christiana Poenisch

The reconstruction period was ending, the barbed wire had just about closed the range for the great cattle drives and railroad tracks were beginning to criss-cross the state when Frederick and Christiana Poenisch and their five children; Ernest, Herman, Robert, Frank and Lena came to Texas in 1882.

Frederick rented some land and they settled near Sherman. Their house was a barn-like structure consisting of one large room with dirt floors and a hay loft. They slept in the loft on hay and feather beds brought with them from Germany. An old wood-burning stove was used for cooking, as well as heating. Their food consisted mainly of rabbits and other small game they shot. Corn was a staple food which was ground for meal and roasted for coffee. Molasses was made from a small crop of sugar cane.

Some time later Frederick bought a tract of land covered with trees and brush. As they cleared the land by hand, the wood was sold for $1.50 per cord.

The climate was damp and the mosquitos were bad. The boys all got malaria. The work had to be done despite the sickness. Frederick was strict with his sons. He sent them out to chop wood. When the chills got too bad, they laid in the hot sun. When the chills were gone they went back to chopping wood.

For entertainment the boys all learned to play musical instruments. They formed a band called the "Germania Band" and played for concerts in Sherman and Denison.

Early in 1889 E. H. Ropes came to Corpus Christi from New York. He envisioned the city as a deep water port and began some exciting plans. He advertised the warm climate, the rich black soil and the strategic location of Corpus Christi as an ideal place to live. Frederick, who wanted to grow vegetables in the black soil, probably saw the inviting advertisements and after living seven years in Sherman, sold their land for a profit and started for Corpus Christi.

They loaded their horses, cattle and household goods on a railroad car and traveled to Beeville, which was the end of the line. From Beeville they traveled to Corpus Christi by wagon, driving through the Nueces Bay at low tide. There was no causeway across the bay at that time.

They arrived on Christmas Day, 1889 and were taken to Flour Bluff by a real estate agent. They looked at some land. Frederick did not like the white sandy soil. A very cold norther came and they had to spend the night in a slaughter house and almost froze. They finally decided on some land in the Hoffman Tract, (formerly, Rabb Ranch) which is now Arcadia Village, Portairs, Southmoorland and Fairview Additions. They paid $3.00 an acre for the land.

In the spring the family cleared the land for farming and built a new home. To make extra money while the farm was getting started, the boys dug water wells by hand on the Laureles ranch and other farms and ranches in the area.

The Federal Census in 1890, gave Corpus Christi a population of 4,387. But this number is estimated to have doubled during the Ropes boom.

Frederick died in 1900 at the age of seventy-six. Frank and Christiana lived with Robert until their deaths. Frank died in 1907. Christiana died in 1924 at the age of 84.

When the Flour Bluff Farm and Garden Tract was put on the market by the Texas Land and Cattle Company in 1900, Ernest, Herman and Robert each bought sizeable tracts of land to start their own farms. They paid $5.00 an acre. Ernest's land was between Ocean Drive and Alameda, where South Shore Estates is now located. Robert's land was between Alameda and McArdle, in the Aberdeen Community. This area is now Parade Place and the Oso Golf Course. Herman

bought his land in the Sunshine Community on the Dump Road which is now Staples Street. The Country Club and Country Club Addition now stands on his farm site.

The Ernest Poenisch Family

Ernest M. Poenisch was born November 9, 1866, in Germany and came to America with his parents in 1882. They lived in Sherman. They moved to Corpus Christi in 1889 and built a home on London Road (now called Ayers Street).

Mary Gertrude Pearse was born in New Zealand, January 10, 1876. The family lived there until Mary was six. At that time there was a native uprising. The natives burned the family's large white, two-story home so they moved to England. The trip from New Zealand to England took three months.

Mary's father then came to America. He left four of his children (Mary, Maud, Agnes, and Martin) in England. After two years, he returned to England to get Mary and Martin. By then the other girls had married and didn't want to move.

Upon their return to America, the family settled in Brenham, Texas. After a few years they again moved. They drove to Corpus Christi in a wagon, coming across Nueces Bay at low tide. Edward chose a site on London Road near the Poenisch family for their home.

Ernest and Mary married in 1898. Their first daughter, Rose, was born in 1901, and then Eda was born in 1903.

Ernest purchased a farm of eighty acres on the bayfront for $5.00 an acre and several hundred acres of cleared land for $3.00 an acre. South Shore Estates now stands on this land.

Shortly after the family moved, Ernest was bitten by a rattlesnake. Mary left the girls with Ernest's mother, and took him to a doctor six miles away. Mary had put Ernest's leg in a bucket of kerosene. By the time she reached the doctor the kerosene had turned green, but the leg was saved.

Their son, Ernest, Jr., was born in 1905.

The family later built a two-story home on Ocean Drive and lived there until their children were grown.

The Herman Poenisch Family

During the time that Frederick Poenisch and his family were moving to Corpus Christi in 1889, Herman answered a want-ad in the German Free Press, a German language newspaper printed in Texas. The ad was by a Mrs. Warlick of Giddings, who wanted a young man to help with her General Store and farm. Herman took the job and went to Giddings. There he met Bertha Hesse, Mrs. Warlick's niece. Bertha was also helping around the house.

After a year in Giddings, Herman and Bertha were married. They moved to Corpus Christi on their wedding day. They lived on a small farm four miles west of the city. Frederick provided a new, two-room house on the forty acres of land. They started farming -- raising vegetables, cattle, hogs and chickens. During the next fourteen years, there were four children born to them: Louise, Minnie, Adolph and Elsie.

They sold the farm and bought a 640 acre tract of land nine miles south of Corpus in the Encinal Farm and Garden tract. This land was purchased from the Texas Land and Cattle Co. They paid $5.00 an acre. The family moved into a small shed-like building until a large two-story, seven room home was completed. This home cost $1,800 to build.

The family continued to grow. There were four more children born: Robert (Bob), Herman, Jr., Pauline and Gertrude (Trudi). Herman, Jr. died at the age of four from tetanus. Pauline died at the age of one and one-half of pneumonia.

Herman and Bertha worked hard to provide a good home for their family. They continued to raise cattle, chickens, hogs and farm products. They sold butter, eggs, meats, vegetables, grain and cotton. The farm work was first done using horses and mules. Later, tractors were used.

The land was cleared of brush and trees for cultivation by a gang of war prisoners. They were brought here by the Bohemian Colony and Mr. Kostoryz, who was then settling a colony west of Corpus Christi.

Bertha and Herman had a wagon, surrey, a spring wagon and a buggy pulled by horses. They went to town twice a week to deliver their produce and to buy groceries and ice. As there was no electricity, they had large home-made ice boxes to store their butter, milk, cream and eggs. The ice was bought in 100 pound pieces and used in the ice boxes. Kerosene lamps provided lighting for the home until carbide lights were installed. Later, the house was wired for electricity.

In 1913, Herman purchased his first automobile, a Ford Sedan. The roads were graded dirt. When the rains came, they had to use the wagons and buggies, as traveling by car was impossible.

Louise and Minnie attended Northside School in the city until the family moved to the new home nine miles from the city. Then, along with Adolph, Elsie, Bob and Trudi, they went to the Sunshine Community School, located two and one-half miles from home.

Louise, the eldest, quit school and helped at home. She later married Charles Kreuz and they established a home for themselves.

Minnie graduated from high school in the city in 1913 and then taught school for many years. She married August Meinrath and moved to Beeville to live.

Adolph helped on the farm after finishing school. In 1928, he married Ruth Ludwig.

Elsie helped at home and later became a teacher. She taught school for four years and then did office work for many years. She lived a single life and helped with her parents as they grew older.

[illegible] helped on the farm. He graduated from high school and worked for the Texas Company. He married Ruby Roper in 1925.

Trudi went to Beeville to finish her high school education. She graduated in 1930. She later married Julius Bauch of Goliad, Texas.

Herman and Bertha continued to live on the farm. Each holiday -- Christmas, New Years, Easter, Birthdays and other special events were celebrated together with their children on the farm.

Bertha passed away in September of 1949 at the age of 78. Herman continued to live in the old home on the farm until his death in 1954 at the age of 85.

The Robert Poenisch Family

Robert Poenisch bought a sizable tract of land for $5.00 an acre in Aberdeen Community near Alameda and the Oso. It was all brush and had to be cleared of mesquite trees by hand. He built a home where Parade Drive now is located. This home was destroyed in 1901 by a tornado. It was replaced

near the same location in 1902. Grandma Poenisch and Frank lived with Robert.

Robert met Edith Ritter, who was working for Mrs. Richard King, taking care of the King children. They were married in the Presbyterian Church on Upper Broadway. Their wedding was the first in this new church built in 1901. They lived in their new home until Edith died of complications at the birth of their first child, Daisy Lena.

In 1906 Grandma, Robert and Frank went back to Germany to visit their sister and brother-in-law, Pauline and George Hertting.

In 1907, the Herttings and their three sons, Paul, George and Felix came to Corpus Christi to live on the farm near the rest of the family. They did some farming but did not like it here, and all except Paul returned to Germany.

After returning from Germany, Robert met Anna Marie Schilling, who was also working for Mrs. King. Robert and Anna were married on April 2, 1908. Their first son, Frederick Robert, was born in 1909.

They farmed raising cotton, vegetables, milk cows, and chickens. They sold butter, cream, vegetables, and chickens to Weil Brothers' Grocery, Behman Brothers' Grocery, the Nueces Hotel, and to several private homes.

In 1910, Paul Hertting married Marie Schilling, who worked for Mrs. King and, after a year of farming, they moved to San Antonio. They bought a rooming house, renting rooms and apartments.

In 1912, Robert and his family moved to San Antonio and lived in Paul's rooming house. A second son, Carl Henry, was born in December, 1912. After several months the family returned to the farm in Corpus Christi. One of the great occasions was the purchase of a Model T Ford in 1913.

In 1916, Marianne was born. When she was six months old a terrible hurricane came. The family had to leave the house and spend the night in the milk house, as it had a concrete floor and was safer than the house. The storm did a lot of damage and killed most of the chickens.

All of the children went to the one-room Aberdeen School which was located on Airline Road. It was about a mile from home. They usually walked, but occasionally rode a donkey to school.

All the family were Lutherans in Germany. There was no Lutheran Church when they came to Corpus Christi, so a few Lutheran families met in a private home to organize a church. Grandma Poenisch, Robert and Anna were charter members. It was organized in 1911 and called the German Evangelical Congregation. It is now St. Paul's United Church of Christ. All of the children were confirmed in that church.

In 1916, Fred and Daisy went to Edward Furman School in Corpus Christi, riding horseback the six miles. In 1918, the family moved to town so the children could go to Corpus Christi High School. Robert bought a house at 1001 Sixth Street. In September, 1919, the great tidal wave and hurricane almost destroyed Corpus Christi. The family moved back to the farm in 1921, and lived there until Robert bought a ranch near Blanco, Texas. Robert and Anna later moved into the town of Blanco and lived there until their deaths. Robert died in 1955. Anna died in 1972.

Daisy went to business college and worked for an insurance company for six years. She married Harry Bowen in 1933. They have three daughters; Harriet, Carolyn, and Kathleen.

Fred worked on the farm. He moved to Blanco to ranch. He married Ruby Byers in 1948.

Carl farmed in Corpus Christi. He married Clara Nesloney in 1936. They later moved to a ranch in Blanco. They have three children; Carl, James and Jean.

Marrianne lived at home until her marriage to Oscar Koemel in 1939. They have one son, Alan. Their farm is located on Woolridge Road.

The Lena Poenisch Family

Lena Anna Poenisch was born to Frederick and Christianna Poenisch on March 22, 1878 in Germany and came to the United States with her parents and four brothers when she was three years old.

Edmond Martin Pearse was born to Martin and Lucy Pearse on June 20, 1863 in New Zealand. He was one of four children born in New Zealand and six others born in Suffolk, England. Edmond left New Zealand with his parents when he was ten years old to return to England as a result of a Maori uprising and burning of the family home. They left the ranch land on which they had homesteaded as a grant from the British government for the purpose of raising sheep and cattle. Ed had many tales to tell his children of his own childhood spent with the Maoris and could, in fact, speak some of the native language. He came to the United States when he was nineteen years old, along with his father and several brothers. Later, his mother and the rest of his family came to the States. His two eldest sisters remained in England. He remembered that his voyage took ninety days in a sailing vessel.

As a young man, Ed worked on the railroad and ranches in the general area of Edna, Texas. He was living with his family on a farm located at the corner of Gollihar and Chapman Ranch Roads when he met and married Lena Anna Poenisch, who was living on an adjoining farm with her family. They were

married on December 7, 1901 in Corpus Christi and bought a forty acre tract of land on Chapman Ranch Road, where Arcadia Village subdivision is now located. They probably chose this location as Lena's father had given her a forty acre tract on the other side of the road. This land was all in native mesquite and chaparral brush, which they cleared out by hand. They built a two-room frame house on it. As the family grew, the house was built onto. Ed and Lena lived there together until he died on October 21, 1934. The house was surrounded by Chinaberry trees and a grove of Mulberry trees, most of which were destroyed in the 1919 hurricane.

Ed and Lena made a living for their family by farming and from a small dairy herd of Jersey cows, from which they made and sold butter. They also had many chickens and sold eggs. They were able to buy several more small tracts of adjoining farmland. At first, Ed used horses and mules to plow and plant. Later, he bought a small tractor.

The children remember years of hardship occasioned by drought and low market prices but there were some good years too. As a family they always had all the necessities of life and even some of the luxuries as evidenced by the purchase of a large Chalmers touring car in about 1916. The years of enjoyment in it were limited, however, as Ed ran into the car belonging to Jonas Weil. He came home, put the car in the garage and went back to horse and buggy travel until the 1920's when the family started driving Ford automobiles.

There was a large silo for the storage of feed on the farm and Ed also built a storm cellar as he had a fear of storms. He would get the family up and dressed no matter what the time of night if a storm came up. He was probably justified in his fear as the 1916 hurricane blew down the silo while

the family was in the storm cellar. The roof of the cellar caved in and was not repaired for the 1919 hurricane so he evacuated the family to the pasture where they all spent the night in a small tenant house in which hay was stored.

Most Sundays were spent visiting with "the kinfolks" and families on neighboring farms. The children had many pets. Animals were an important part of their lives. Ed built a cart and harnessed a billy goat to it for the children to ride in.

The big barn, the hayloft and the cotton seed bin were fun places to play. The dug-out tanks to hold water for the stock were fun places to swim and even to take a bath, though probably a muddy one. The children all went to school at the Alta Vista two-room schoolhouse located at the corner of Gollihar and Kostoryz roads where the Whataburger now is. Ed was a "trustee" for the school district and for several years the family boarded the two lady school teachers in their home, providing them with a horse and buggy to go the two miles to the schoolhouse. Most of the time the children walked, rode a horse, and later even had bicycles to ride to school. The Alta Vista schoolhouse was the center of most of the family's social life. They attended "preachings" and old fashioned "box suppers". Many of the young people in the community attended social gatherings at neighboring schools.

Ed and Lena had three children: Annie Lena who married Lonnie Clark; Edmund who married Hermina Krusinsky; and Christiana who married Ray Peterson. The grandchildren of Ed and Lena from these three children numbered nine. There are twenty-three great-grandchildren, and two great, great grandchildren.

After Ed died in 1934, Lena continued to farm for several years, then sold part of the farm to a subdivision developer. They tore down the old

house and used the lumber to build a smaller and more modern house on Fannin Street, where she lived until her death July 9th, 1969.

She was very generous and shared her home with numerous Navy couples and families during World War II when housing was scarce. She spent the time during her later years doing handwork, gardening, and raising pets. (23)

Because of compatible values, the American and German rarely had any extensive cultural conflicts. There were certain attitudes, however, that tended to divide the groups, at least in the early years.

> *...Americans admired the skills, diligence, thrift, and family strength that seemed to make the Germans ideal candidates for Americanization, but deplored the clannishness and cultural traits that kept them stubbornly apart.* (24)

On July 19, 1907, an article appeared in the Corpus Christi Caller newspaper in which the reasons for admitting more immigrants, particularly Europeans, were presented.

> *We believe the Italian, the Jew, the Bohemian, the German, the Russian, the Irishman, has as much right here as the native born American, provided of course, that he is moral, upright, industrious, and free from contagious disease, a respector of law and a believer in a democratic form of government. ...How many years...do you think it would take to place Southwest Texas under the plow if we waited for young America? In our opinion it would never be done. The young American of today is not seeking that kind of job. Show him an acre of chaparral brush and ask him to clear it up ready for the plow and wait for his answer. He will give you the merry ha, ha, and tell you to 'go chase yourself.' Not he for the ax and grubbing hoe. You must look to the sturdy foreigner....* (25)

The opinion presented in the article apparently reflected the prevailing attitude toward Germans in South Texas. There were instances of school

children being made fun of for their accents, but the German population was small in this region and more often than not local residents confused them with the Czechs.

Elsewhere in the state, the German population was sizable and influential -- in the 1850s, they outnumbered Anglos and Mexicans in San Antonio. (26) The communities they settled, particularly Fredericksburg and New Braunfels, still maintain the German language and culture. Locally, however, there is virtually no overt retention of the culture aside from the traditions that were absorbed into the "American way."

> *American culture of the century after 1880 moved in fits and starts toward the values cherished by German Americans. A love of music and drama and liberal attitudes about card playing, drinking, and Sunday relaxation ceased to be regarded as foreign imports.* (27)

German contributions, on local, state and national levels have been extensive (see page 109). That they have assimilated so completely and have become "among the least visible of American ethnic groups," (28) indicates the extent to which Americans of all ethnic backgrounds have made the German culture part of their own.

> *By 1978 most American residents calling themselves German were of third or subsequent generations. They differed little from national norms demographically or economically. Only their slightly greater tendencies toward marriage, male-headed households, higher education, lower unemployment, and greater than average proportions of farmers in their ranks suggested the last remnants of historically distinctive values and behavior.* (29)

In recent years, anthropologist Miriam J. Wells has studied the degrees of assimilation in American ethnic groups and defined an intricate process involving public and private, cultural and structural assimilations. Observing Germans, Poles and Mexicans, Wells discovered norms that dictated public behavior that was different from the private or ethnic behavior expressed in the home.

> *These standards govern the handling of intercommunity differences, exhorting townspeople to act in public as if all are alike. Any behavior which highlights or contributes to contrasts of class, ethnicity, or opinion is avoided and heavily sanctioned. The only distinctions which are approved for public comment are individual differences supposedly due to variation in personal endeavor.* (30)

The possibility exists, then, that groups such as the Germans, while maintaining a non-ethnic identity in public, continue to nurture certain ethnic customs in the home. The family and home, rather than language or culture, come to be the ethnic identifiers. The plausibility of this theory is supported by the tendency of local Germans to chronicle their family histories which reflect not their German culture as much as the familial cohesiveness. By extension, the celebration of family achievements honors the value that Germans have traditionally placed on home and heritage.

ENDNOTES: GERMANS

[1] (Footnote) Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 770.

[2] Ibid, p. 770.

[3] Ibid, p. 407.

[4] Ibid, p. 407.

[5] Ibid, p. 407.

[6] Ibid, p. 407.

[7] Ibid, p. 407.

[8] Stephanie Bernardo, The Ethnic Almanac (Garden City, New York: Dolphin Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981), p. 33

[9] Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 409.

[10] Ibid, p. 409.

[11] Stephanie Bernardo, The Ethnic Almanac (Garden City, New York: Dolphin Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981), p. 30.

[12] Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 409.

[13] Stephanie Bernardo, The Ethnic Almanac (Garden City, New York: Dolphin Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981), p. 30.

[14] James Patrick McGuire, Germans in Texas (Institute of Texan Cultures, 1970), p. 4.

[15] The Kleberg County Historical Commission, Kleberg County History (Hart Graphics, Austin, Texas; 1979), pp. 14-20.

[16] Ibid, pp. 347-8.

[17] Interview with David Kircher, Violet, Texas, July 1, 1981.

[18] Rev. Mark Moeslein, The Story of St. Anthony's, Violet, Texas (No publisher, 1921), p. 6.

[19] Ibid, p. 6.

[20]Theodore A. Fuller, When the Century and I Were Young (No publisher, May, 1979), pp. 143-5.

[21]Interview with David Kircher, Violet, Texas, July 1, 1981.

[22]Daisy Brown, Eda Lee, Elsie Poenisch, Christi Peterson, Harriet Tillman, Poenisch Family, 1864-1975 (No publisher), p. 1.

[23]Ibid, pp. 2-10.

[24]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 406.

[25]Paul Schuster Taylor, An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas (University of North Carolina Press, 1934; reprint ed., New York: Russell and Russell, 1971), p. 284.

[26]T. R. Fehrenbach, Lone Star: A History of Texas and the Texans (New York: Collier Books, 1968), p. 285.

[27]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 425.

[28]Ibid, p. 406.

[29]Ibid, p. 406.

[30]Miriam J. Wells, "Oldtimers and Newcomers: The Role of Context in Mexican-American Assimilation," Aztlan, Volume 10 (Fall, 1980), pp. 271-295.

Jewish: In addition to the names of holidays that many non-Jews are familiar with, such as Yom Kippur, Rosh ha-Shanah and Hanukkah, Hebrew has given to English *amen, hallelujah, cherub, satan,* and *sabbath.* A Jewish playwright from England is credited with first using the term 'melting pot' to describe the ethnic confluence in America.

Many of the traditions in a Jewish wedding are done to guarantee good luck and to ward off evil. At the end of the ceremony, the groom smashes a glass under his foot to scare evil spirits away from the festivities and guests shout, *'Mazel Tov'* -- good luck. The canopy under which the couple stands during the ceremony, serves to protect them from evil.

As in most cultures, the passage from childhood to adult life is an important Jewish observation. When a boy reaches, thirteen, he becomes Bar Mitzvah -- Son of the Commandment. After a period of religious training, the young man is considered old enough to become a full member of the Jewish community and the Bar Mitzvah celebrates his coming of age. Since there are specific obligations the man now must accept, the ceremony has serious connotations, but overall, it is a joyous occasion commemorated with parties and gifts.

For Jewish girls, the ceremony is Bat or Bas Mitzvah and can be celebrated when she is twelve years old. The Bat Mitzvah is not as common as the Bar and there are parts of the ceremonies that differ but increasingly, girls are studying and celebrating the formal responsibility to their community.

There is another Jewish custom that some believe is meant to protect a home from evil -- the *mezuzah.* The *mezuzah* is a parchment within a container that is fastened near the front door; the word means doorpost. On the parchment is written Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. On the reverse side, the word *Shaddai,* -- Almighty -- is lettered. The container, made of wood, stone, metal or ceramic, usually has a small hole through which the word can be seen. While there is some tradition of protection associated with the *mezuzah,* many Jews today feel

it protects them from sinning, rather than any evil spirits.

What often is described as 'Jewish food,' bagels, lox, and chopped liver, for example, usually comes from another ethnic group. Bagels are Polish in origin. Kosher, definetly Jewish, pertains to the manner in which the food is prepared rather than the kind of food. Aside from pork, certain shellfish and birds of prey, most foods are acceptable. At particular times, for holidays, one dish may predominate owing to its symbolism. *Matzoh*, meaning unleavened, is the bread baked during Passover and represents the food the early Jews had to eat as they fled the Syrian attack of Jerusalem. They had no time to wait for the bread to rise.

Like other ethnic groups, Jews suffer from certain diseases that affect others very little. Tay-Sachs is one, a degenerative disease that results in blindness and mental retardation. Dysautonomia, which causes high blood pressure and recurring pnuemonia, seems confined to those Jews with ancestors from the Pale in Russia. Apparently, inbreeding caused the recessive traits to dominate and the disease spread. This is the possible explanation for most of the 'Jewish diseases.'

from The Ethnic Almanac

It would be presumptuous and inappropriate to attempt to relate the history of the Jewish people for the last six thousand years. It has been done elsewhere and very well; to try to repeat such an undertaking for the purpose of this project would be irresponsible. A detailed account of their history in the United States is difficult due to the diversity of the group. This section will cover the main causes for Jewish immigration to America, their patterns of settlement and general descriptions of their experiences in the United States. The Jewish heritage in South Texas will be shown through interviews.

The first Jewish immigrants arrived in New Amsterdam in 1654. Originally from Spain, the Sephardim (from the Hebrew word for Spain) had been migrating since 1492 from Holland to Brazil and finally to America.

> *These Jews were tradesmen, artisans and professional people; with their small numbers they found little problem in economic, political and (to some degree) social assimilation to American society. (1)*

Some early American colonies prohibited the permanent settlement of non-Christians, so there were few Jewish immigrants and their influence was minor. The merchant and shipping trades drew them and by the mid-eighteenth century, they had settled in Philadelphia, Charleston and other cities that supported these industries. (2)

The Protestant colonists tended to distrust both Jews and Catholics, who were generally non-English. Their skills were recognized, however, and both groups proved loyal to the Patriot cause during the Revolution. (3)

> *As long as their numbers were low and they seemed to accept American values, they were welcome; but the tension remained and would cause further clashes with the beginning of large-scale immigration in the nineteenth century. (4)*

In 1848, there were numerous revolutions in Europe. Prior to the actual collapse of the governments, a wave of Ashkenazim began immigrating. The term Ashkenazim is Biblical and refers to those Jews from the German-speaking regions of central Europe and Poland. Their language was primarily Yiddish, a combination of Middle High German, Hebrew, Aramaic and the host country language. Most of these Ashkenazim Jews were German by nationality.

Some were motivated to emigrate by the political unrest, some by the economic uncertainty of the time; but most of these Jews came for the same cause that had driven Jews for thousands of years: the desire to live free and in peace. Throughout history, Jews had been blamed for everything from drought to the Black Plague. Where they lived and what jobs they held had always been controlled. In America, they saw the opportunity to live, work and pray without fear of pressures and reprisals.

Between 1840 and 1870, approximately 200,000 Ashkenazim arrived in the United States. (5) This relatively small number was quickly absorbed into the mainstream. Although they had once been confined to ghettos* in Europe, their recent experience had been in urban centers where the Enlightenment

* *Ghetto, Italian for 'little city', was a self-governing area within a city where Jews were, by law, forced to live.*

and French Revolutionary liberalism held influence. In most countries, Jews could not own land nor enter certain professions, such as medicine, and their work experience was limited. Most were merchants or peddlers, selling wares from pushcarts. Some were money-lenders or bankers since those were the jobs no one wanted. They arrived in America during a period of economic expansion and their talents were needed. Although they arrived with very little money, their labor and skill allowed them to move rather quickly from peddling into the management of small retail businesses.

The liberal philosophy that had grown out of their heritage of oppression was reinforced by the teachings of the period. "The Jews, because of their problems...the hassles, have a great depth of understanding, they tolerate a lot." (6) The urban environment, both in Europe and in the United States, exposed them to current ideas and fostered progressive attitudes. Eventually, liberalism affected their religion and the Reform Jews were born.

> *This sect abandoned, for the most part, Hebrew in the liturgy, admitted women to synagogue pews, introduced organs and choirs, renounced dietary taboos, permitted exogamous marriage (marriage with non-Jews), and rejected Zionism, the Biblical notion of a return to the promised homeland. As a group of Charleston Reform Jews put it, 'this country is our Palestine, this city our Jerusalem, this house of God our Temple.' (7)*

The Ashkenazim who arrived before the Civil War were, in the main, German; the Ashkenazim arriving between 1900 and 1914 were from Eastern Europe. In those years, one and a quarter million Jewish immigrants came to America from Latvia, Rumania, Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine area of Russia. (8) Compared to earlier waves, this immigration was large and took place in a shorter time. In addition, the East European Jews were Orthodox:

"...they appeared outlandishly backward to their Sephardic and German brethren in America." (9) Most came from rural areas and small towns where nineteenth century liberalism was unknown. Many of the men wore *kippah* (skullcaps) and *paoth* (ringlets about the ears now common among certain sects). Most were artisans but as many as a quarter million "may have been unskilled, and almost none were from the professional class." (10) While the earlier immigrants had acculturated rapidly and had "moved into the middle class with relative ease," (11) this group established ethnic neighborhoods. "The intense ethnic life in these enclaves underscored the cultural and class differences between the Americanized Jews and the newcomers." (12)

Although the Eastern European Jews were victims of religious and ethnic persecution, especially in Tsarist Russia, changes in the economic structure also played a part in their decision to emigrate. The peasant society had broken down and the population had risen, but in Russia the Jews were confined to the Pale of Settlement and could not move to cities where job opportunities existed. (13) The Pale constituted about 20 percent of the regions then within the borders of European Russia. All but a priviledged few were forbidden to live outside the Pale, and within, restrictive laws further limited Jews to residence in towns and cities. (14)

In many ways, the Jewish immigration was similar to other ethnic groups: often a single family member, usually a son, would arrive and work to arrange passage for relatives. Associations of *landsleit* - men from the same town or region - were formed and assisted in finding work for immigrants. Such organizations were common to most European immigrant groups, especially those with largely rural experiences.

The Orthodox Jews from small towns were used to a close community life directed, by and large, by the rabbi. Social pressures in Europe had weakened the control somewhat, but the traditions of education, charity and religion were still strong within the "synagogue community." (15) In the United States, however, the rabbi's duties as arbitrator and overseer of civil laws were usurped by unions and government agencies. Even *kashrut* - the observation of dietary laws - had become a matter of personal choice and could be supervised by a commercial merchant. In Europe, the rabbi as teacher conducted the *heder*, an elementary school for boys that "...emphasized reading the prayerbook in Hebrew, studying the Pentateuch, and, for the more advanced, studying Biblical commentaries and the legal codes." (16) Schooling in Judaism in America was confined to evenings and summer, as a supplement to public education.

> *The free state school promised material and social betterment; the heder provided the minimum Jewish continuity. Parental exhortations to the young to find success in the secular world heightened the conflict between the traditional culture and the American way.* (17)

Unlike other religions, Judaism is not totally dependent upon an actual house of worship and minister for services. Lil Racusin of the Corpus Christi Jewish Community Center describes Judaism as a "traveling religion." At the time of the Diaspora - the dispersion of Jews from Palestine - the rabbis realized that there would be no single center to preserve the religion. They worked for one year to establish the rules that would guide individuals in the practice of their religion. Prayers for one and for a *minyan* - ten or more men over the age of thirteen - were set down to insure the survival of

Judaism. Although there are formal rituals and strict observances, the strength of Jewishness rests in the individual. The Pentatuech lists six hundred and thirteen rules and responsibilities that provide the structure necessary for the completion of religious, as well as civic, duties. The early Jewish settlers followed these traditions; the first Ashkenazic congregation in America was not founded until 1802. (18)

The variations possible on the theme of Judaism resulted in the division of the Jewish community.

> *Jews long resident in the United States ...harbored animosity toward their brethren from eastern Europe. The older American Jewish community, originally populated by emigrants from the Iberian peninsula and central Europe, feared the entry of the strange-garbed, orthodox Jews. American Jews worried that with the arrival of co-religionists from Russia, Poland, and Rumania the latent anti-Semitism in this country would erupt, and events proved them to be correct. Once the East Europeans arrived, however, the Americanized Jews did everything they could to ease their adjustment to the New World.* (19)

The differences in ideologies - traditional vs. modern - created movements "as different in doctrine and observance as are Catholics and Protestants among Christians." (20)

By the early 1900s, cities throughout the United States had become "major Jewish centers." (21) The "German Jews" had migrated to Cincinnati, Chicago and San Francisco, while the so-called "Russian Jews" stayed in the east, in New York and Philadelphia. (22) Although America did offer more opportunities to Jews, they were still subjected to discrimination through quota systems, hiring practices and bans against their advancement within corporations. Because of discrimination, many Jews started their own businesses as soon as they were able to financially. The drive to succeed that

is often cited as a stereotype of the group has been equated to the will to survive (23) and to the education so highly valued in Jewish culture.

> *Occupational concentration in commerce or a high level of achievement in white-collar professions is almost a trademark of the American Jew. While explanations for this vary, one reason is the traditional respect and high priority given to education... Some observers have noted that, to a persecuted minority group, as the Jews have undoubtedly been, education represented an intellectual 'investment,' which, unlike other forms of capital, could not depreciate or be expropriated.* (24)

Although Jews have historically been an oppressed minority, their educational attainments have, generally, led to economic self-sufficiency. Because, as a group, Jews have not been dependent upon society for sustenance, non-Jews often fail to realize the depth of the discrimination directed against them.

> *Employment in certain prestigious fields, private university (and secondary school) admissions policies, exclusion from resort hotels, choice residential districts and innumerable social organizations are the major areas of discriminatory practice.* (25)

The discrimination compelled America's Jews to organize their own associations, clubs and resorts, such as the hotels in the Catskill Mountains of New York. This led to further accusations of Jewish "clannishness" and created a "vicious circle, a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy..." (26) While bigoted non-Jews refused to allow Jewish participation in most areas, they also resented the fact that many Jews were able to form their own separate social life, and escape some of the discrimination. The less prosperous Jews, often Orthodox, were locked into an economic strata that did not allow

escape. For these, physical abuse and humiliation from "street thugs and bullies" (27) was a common occurrence. Jewish children were beaten and the beards of old men were pulled. The Second Jewish Catalog notes that the American Sign Language for the Deaf has as the sign for 'Jew," the hand pulling a beard. Whether the sign came about as a result of the harassment the Jewish men suffered is not known, but the Catalog states: "This sign may be anti-Semitic, as the sign for a grabby person is also made by a pulling motion under the chin." (28)

Their long history of persecution had instilled a strong sense of family, "amounting almost to protective tribalism." (29) Their experience in surviving through repeated attempts of genocide taught Jews to take care of themselves for few others would help them.

> *The herd instinct for self-preservation is hardly unique to the Jews; only more profitable for them, since it has provided a safehold from which to proceed toward assimilation.* (30)

In spite of the assimilation of the German Jews and gradual acculturation of those from East Europe, most non-Jewish Americans considered the Jews 'different.' Their dietary laws, religious observations and rituals seemed mysterious, and their ability to achieve "cultural pluralism" (31) in a country that was demanding at least public conformity caused suspicion. This widespread suspicion permitted both overt and covert discriminatory practices to be carried out against Jewish Americans.

By the end of World War I, restrictions had served to decrease Jewish immigration but the internal discrimination increased. The Ku Klux Klan concentrated its venom on Jews, blacks and Catholics while individuals like

Henry Ford and Father Charles Coughlin in the 1930s led anti-Semitic campaigns.

Father Coughlin, a Roman Catholic priest in Detroit, promoted the stereotyping of Jews as Communist agitators and "by 1938 he was justifying the Nazi persecution of Jews as a defense against Communism." (32) Eventually, the federal government asked the Detroit archbishop to "silence the bigoted priest because his ravings were detrimental to the war effort." (33)

Within the Jewish community, the issue of Zionism was impeding the collective effort that may have counteracted the anti-Jewish diatribes. Since the Diaspora, Jews had sought to re-establish their homeland of Israel. Zion "has historically been regarded as a symbol of the center of Jewish national life" (34); it is Jerusalem & Israel, the symbol and reality of Judaism. Zionism was a doctrinal tenet of Orthodox Jews, but had been dropped by Reform Jews. When Conservative Judaism emerged in the early 1900s, "the movement stressed 'the maintenance of Jewish tradition in its historical continuity' but countenanced change in religious practice, provided it was done with reverence for 'historical Judaism '" (35)

Conservatism, a "happy medium" (36), settled somewhere between the Orthodox and Reform divisions.

> *The result was a compromise, whereby the use of English for the sermon and the mixing of the sexes in the pews, as well as a general upgrading in the status of women, were retained from Reform Judaism; from Orthodoxy came greater stress on Hebrew in the liturgy, greater observance of Sabbath and dietary law, and the restoration of the Jewish homeland (Palestine) as a doctrinal tenet - Zionism. (37)*

Beginning in the 1920s, Zionism attracted many American Jews, not because they wished to emigrate to Palestine but because of the ancient dream of having a center, a homeland. It was an emotional and political movement -- the re-establishment of a Jewish state that would provide Jews all over the world with a haven from persecution.

In the United States, there were three distinct Jewish viewpoints on Zionism. The non-Zionists desired the center for Jewish religion and culture, but questioned the proposed status of an independent state: They feared, correctly, that the loyalty of American Jews would be suspect. The anti-Zionists, often extreme Reform Jews, believed that Jews were merely a religious group and did not need a nation. They also believed that one could not be an American and a Zionist simultaneously. (38) Pro-Zionist support was mainly through financial contributions although *aliyah* - literally, 'going up' and pertaining to immigration or a pilgrimage to Israel - was not uncommon. (39)

The attitudes toward Zionism created discord within the American Jewish community and prevented any organized response to growing anti-Semitism. The liberal bent of many Jews was misinterpreted as Communism during the era of "frenzied nativism" (40) in the 1920s: "...Jews were portrayed as architects of the Russian Revolution and as agents of world Communism preparing to seize control of America." (41) The discrimination in both the public and private sectors continued, with variances in intensity, throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. Large corporations and companies refused to hire Jews for any position and, with the exception of large city districts, few schools would employ Jewish teachers. In spite of the Jewish respect for higher education, colleges and universities had quotas for Jewish admissions, and Jewish appointments to faculties were rare. In the mid-1930s, a Yale Law School dean

was trying to place a Jewish graduate and was told by a northwestern university dean that no Jewish candidates had ever been appointed to the faculty. The graduate under consideration was Abe Fortas, later a United States Supreme Court Justice. (42)

Also in the mid-1930s, the first wave of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany began arriving. Most of these were

> *middle-aged and middle-class: 74 percent were over 40; nearly 20 percent were professionals, another 60 percent were in commerce. (43)*

Between 1935 and 1941, 150,000 Jewish immigrants came to the United States and, since the country was in the midst of the Depression, accusations circulated that they were creating additional problems. Because they had been forced to emigrate after careers had been established, they experienced difficulties in making the transition.

> *For this highly educated, cosmopolitan group, cultural isolation and the loss of social and economic status made adjustment particularly painful. In 1941 a study was made to refute charges that the refugees were a burden on the economy; it reported that refugees had established 239 businesses in 32 cities and had created jobs for others. (44)*

Among the refugees that arrived in those years were Albert Einstein, Erich Fromm, and Victor Weisskopf.

In 1941, immigration laws were strict and quotas were set for each country. A bill went before Congress that would have allowed the entry of 20,000 Jewish children from Germany but permission to increase the quota to

accommodate them was denied. As the situation grew increasingly worse for Jews in Germany, the United States repeatedly refused to raise immigration limits.

> *The State Department imposed even more complicated and time-consuming procedures on applications for visas. In mid-1940, when precious unused visas would have saved lives, the official in charge recommended putting 'every obstacle in the way' and suggested various administrative devices that would 'postpone and postpone and postpone the granting of visas.'*
>
> *In late 1942 the State Department deliberately suppressed for months the first authoritative underground reports on the Nazi plan to systematically exterminate all Jews. (45)*

Members of the American Zionist movement asked the United States Government to pressure Great Britain into opening up Palestine to additional refugees -- immigration had been cut in 1939 -- but nothing was done. Shiploads of Jewish refugees from Europe made it to the shores of Palestine only to be deported. (46)

Within the American Jewish community, numerous divisions were apparent from the conglomeration of organizations and agencies attempting to counteract anti-Semitism and direct political action. In 1943, the American Jewish Conference consisted of 85 national groups. The AJC had "amassed an impressive record over the years by firmly but unobtrusively interceding in every serious instance of prejudice." (47) The more aggressive American Jewish Congress had clashed with the AJC in the 1930s with a rigorous campaign of demonstrations and boycotts against German imports. In addition, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee attracted substantial followings. The primary collaboration of these groups occurred with fund-raising efforts to aid Jews escaping from Nazi Germany.

In 1943 the American Jewish Conference attempted to establish a representative body to direct political and rescue efforts, but again unity was not complete. The conference was able to agree on a program, except on the issue of a declaration in support of a Jewish commonwealth to be established in Palestine at the end of the war.

Thus, at a time when the intervention of the United States might have saved some from annihilation, the American Jewish community was unable to overcome internal differences and speak with a single voice. (48)

American Jews did urge the War Department to bomb the gas chambers and crematorias at Auschwitz in the summer of 1944, but the requests went unheeded. Although the Air Force was bombing the area regularly, the military stated that the crematorias were "nonmilitary objectives" and such diversions would "extend the war." (49) By the end of World War II, a third of the world's Jews had been exterminated in the Holocaust. While Jewish Americans had joined in the struggle to defeat the Nazi movement and by doing so achieved integration into the American mainstream, they also had become aware of their ethnic and religious heritage.

In the postwar years, discrimination lessened with the advent of the civil rights movement. The acculturation process continued and by 1970, the Jewish population was third- and fourth-generation American. (50) The children and grandchildren of immigrants attended universities that had been closed to their parents and, in most cases, moved into family businesses. Professional and management opportunities opened up.

In 1971, 40 percent of a sample work force were employed as managers or administrators, a proportion three or four times that of the general population.... By the 1970s over 80 percent of college-age Jews were actually attending college, and 71 percent of all Jews between the ages of 25 and 29 had college degrees. (51)

Although the ethnic neighborhoods began to decline as families moved to suburbs, a fear of a loss of Jewish identity spurred many to "adapt older forms (of religious expression) and to develop new strategies that would be more congruent with American life." (52) The synagogue once again became a center for religious as well as social and educational activities.

Conservative Judaism attracted the greatest numbers and although Orthodoxy remained small, its parochial schools enrolled 85,000 in 1976. (53) Extreme Orthodox communities, such as the Hasidic, Lubavitcher and Satmer sects increased in size and number, while Sephardic and Syrian Jews continued to maintain their own synagogues. The diversification within the group was heightened, but the common thread of Judaism strengthened, especially in support of Israel.

Initially, the United States was hesitant to support the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states for fear of alienating the oil-producing Arab countries. American Jewry had gained the support of President Harry S. Truman, however, and within hours of the Israeli declaration of independence in 1948, the United States recognized the new country. The extensive support for Israel by American Jews has been described as "guilt." During the War, they "had failed to come to the aid of their helpless brethren in Europe; they now had the opportunity to extend assistance to the embattled Jews of Israel, the 'saving remnant.'" (54) Although guilt may be a factor, the

overriding issue is the re-establishment of a homeland, an end to Jewish exile.

> *The remarkable activization of the Jewish community at moments of supreme crisis, as in 1948 when the state of Israel was proclaimed and in the 1967 and 1973 wars, when its destruction appeared possible, reflected the importance of its well-being for the self-esteem of American Jews and as an essential element in their group identity. Support of Israel served as a secular-ethnic replacement for, or reinforcement of, religion. As the center of Hebrew culture, Israel enriched American Jewry.* (55)

American Jewry has also been called upon for support of Russian Jews in terms of financial as well as political aid. The American Conference on Soviet Jewry, together with other organizations, "lobbied the U. S. government to intervene on the grounds that the Soviet government was violating human-rights agreements." (56)

> *Between 1966 and 1977 about 130,000 Jews emigrated from Russia; some 15,000 of them came to the United States, and nearly half settled in New York City. Many were professionals and white-collar workers who had to accept lower-status employment; all found the transition to the free-market conditions of the United States difficult.* (57)

Another Jewish immigrant group, the Israelis, has created some problems for the American Jewish community to the extent that they have not been formally recognized as an immigrant group. It is difficult for many Jews to understand how the Israelis could leave the land all Jews have fought long and hard to attain. Many see their emigration as abandonment and refer to them as *yordim*, Hebrew for 'those who descend.' (58)

The realities of life in Israel, however, have for many outweighed the emotional ideals. One man who spent a year in Israel described it:

> *All your life it gets bashed into your head: the land of milk and honey. You go there and you find that it's a hard, hard country with more problems than most countries have to overcome. It is desolate, there are racial problems with the Arabs, wars, and they have to turn desert into farms.* (59)

In addition to dealing with the international issues, many American Jews have begun examining the difference between Jewish religion and ethnicity. There are many Jews who are non-religious, and some who have converted to Christianity, yet still consider themselves Jewish. There are questions about how much of the religion is involved in the ethnicity and how the two can possibly be separated, but most ethnic Jews believe that the values learned in the home contributed to their Jewish identity and are not strongly connected to the religion. "Being Jewish is not just a religion anymore, it's a way of life; it is ideals. If you get down to the basics, it even has a very good dietary system." (60)

The continuing issue for American Jews is the impression held of them by non-Jews. Although discrimination against them has practically disappeared in the United States, there are still degrees of unease and suspicion between the two groups. The 'typical Jew,' whether in the guise of Shakespeare's Shylock or Dickens' Fagin, feed the image of an aggressive, competitive, tightfisted person bent on success at any cost. The Jewish stereotype of non-Jews, that they will turn on Jews in times of crisis and can never be counted on or trusted, tends to further polarize. As with most minority groups, the discrimination suffered becomes expected and the resultant behaviors seen in both groups are reinforced.

The Jewish experience in America is unique among ethnic groups. Their numbers are small - only four percent of the population (61) -- yet they constitute fifty percent of world Jewry. They tend to sense their heritage as part of the present, an almost tangible connection. Their history provided them with certain attitudes and skills that came together in the United States:

> *...the fortuitous conjunction of circumstances in which European ghetto existence and restriction to certain trades, coupled with a bent toward education, combined to uniquely prepare the Jews to take advantage of capitalistic expansion in the modern world.* (62)

Jewish migration to Texas coincided with the waves of immigration from Europe in 1848, the 1860s and the early 1900s. Although there was no formal Jewish settlement in any particular region, individuals played important parts in Texas history.

Adolphus Sterne arrived in Nacogdoches in 1826. He fought in the Fredonia Rebellion and later held a number of positions under the Mexican government. In the early 1800s, Sam Houston was baptized a Catholic in the Sterne home. Sterne served in both houses of congress and was a state senator at the time of his death in 1852. (63)

During the Texas Revolution, Dr. Albert Levy, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, served as surgeon for the army. In 1836, he was captured by the Mexican army but escaped. After the war, he practiced medicine in Matagorda, where he died in the mid-1860s. (64)

Jacob de Cordova arrived in Galveston in 1837. By 1838, he had moved to Houston, started a real estate business and founded the first International Order of Oddfellows in Texas. Beginning in 1837, he served in the state legislature and received authorization to lay out the town of Waco. Other achievements included publishing a newspaper and gathering extensive information and data on the geography of Texas and notable citizens for books sold world-wide. He died in Bosque County in 1868. (65)

Through the efforts of Rosanna Osterman, the city of Galveston had a Jewish cemetery in 1852. For Yom Kippur, 1856, the first religious services

in Galveston were held in her brother's home. Rosanna stayed on the island when the Union forces took the city during the Civil War and managed to transmit information on Union Army activities to the Confederates. She was killed in a steamboat explosion in 1866 and her will left money for the building of synagogues in Galveston and Houston, donations for hospitals throughout the United States, and established incomes for a nondenominational home for orphans and widows. (66)

The first Jewish settler in Corpus Christi was Julius Henry who arrived in 1858. He was born in Posen, then part of Prussia, in 1839; in 1854, he immigrated to the United States. After working in New York and Pennsylvania, he moved to Indianola. He traveled throughout Texas, then settled in Corpus Christi where he became a merchant and served as Alderman. In 1897, he became Postmaster. (67)

The Bris Millah (Circumcision) of one of his sons in 1875 was the first performed in Corpus Christi. (68)

Another early Jewish settler was Emanuel Morris, who had an import/export business. He was the first to export oleomargarine to Europe. When the shipment arrived in Hamburg, Germany, and it was learned that the oleo was a substitute for butter, the cargo was dumped in the harbor. (69)

One of the most influential and renowned citizens of Galveston was Rabbi Cohen who arrived to serve the congregation of B'Nai Israel in 1888. He became indispensable through his extensive community involvement. He directed the Jewish Immigration Information Bureau, helping to settle newcomers in Texas, and was an advocate of statewide prison reform. During World War I, Cohen worked with President Woodrow Wilson to provide rabbis for the armed services. (70) Although his congregation was in Galveston,

he traveled throughout South Texas officiating at ceremonies and visiting Jewish families in communities like Corpus Christi, too small to support their own synagogues.

Charles B. Weil of Corpus Christi recalled the Rabbi and the stories about him:

"Anytime there was a need for a rabbi's help -- a wedding, death, or any reason -- Rabbi Cohen would come. He was a great friend of my father and stayed in our home most of the time. I heard many of the stories. He was one of the greatest men that lived. He was born in England. He refused to fight in the Boer War, but he volunteered to help and in as much as he was one of those gifted people who learned any language overnight, he became a translator for the Hottentot and spoke various African dialects."

"I remember once when he was in our home. Over the fireplace was a tapestry of dancing girls before a kaliff or something; he was sitting on a throne. Over the throne was written something -- looked like Greek to me. He sat there and read it in the original language. My father said, 'What are you reading?' 'You own that tapestry. It's beautiful, but don't you know what it says?' Father said, 'No, I didn't know it said anything.' 'May this dance be acceptable in the eyes of Allah,' Cohen said. He knew more things."

"The story of his trip to Washington... He went to the quarantine station in Galveston whenever he could, to talk to the refugees who were coming into this country, and see if any of them needed help. There was this one man he met who was a Russian and he was going to be deported. Cohen talked to...the man who managed the place, and said, 'He tells me if he goes back he's going to be killed. He fought against the Tsar.' The man said, 'Well,

that's what he told us, but there's nothing we can do. He's got to go back.' Cohen said, 'Let me see if I can help him. I'll try.' So the old man got on his bicycle and went down to the railroad station and got on the first train going north from Galveston to Washington, D. C. He drags his bicycle out of the baggage car and in the same clothes he started off in, goes to the White House. He wants to see the President."

"I don't remember what year it was so I can't tell you what President it was, Garfield, or maybe Roosevelt, Teddy. The secretary said, 'I'm sorry. If you have no appointment, you can't see him.' 'Well, just get word that Rabbi Cohen is here from Galveston.' The secretary returned and said, 'Go back and sit down, he'll see you.' Cohen walked in and shook hands. 'What can I do for you?' asked the President. Rabbi Cohen said, 'Well, they tell me they're going to send this man back.'"

"The President said, 'There is nothing I can do. We've got our laws, you know, Rabbi. I wish I could help you, but I don't know a thing we can do. I do want to compliment you. You left a day or so ago without a change of clothes. You tell me you rode a bicycle, brought it with you; you don't have a place to stay. I just can't help but admire the way you Jews take care of each other. When one Jew is in trouble he always goes to another Jew, and he's bound to be taken care of one way or another. The sacrifices you make for your fellow man...' Cohen said, 'Who said this man's a Jew?' 'Isn't he?' 'No. He's a Russian; I don't know what he is, but he isn't Jewish.' 'Do you mean you came up here for a Gentile?' Cohen replied, 'He's a human being, isn't he?'"

"The President called someone in, dictated a note and by the time Rabbi Cohen got back to Galveston, that man was in detention, but he was going to

wait until he would be allowed into the United States; he was not deported. That's the kind of guy Rabbi Cohen was. Only thing I didn't like about him was he snored. He slept in my room whenever he came down to Corpus Christi. He was quite a fellow."

The Weil family is one of the oldest in Corpus Christi; Charles Weil arrived from Alsace in 1866. His daughter, the late Fanny Alexander, did extensive research on the family which reflects the history and settlement of this area.

"The Weil name is a common one. The family seems to have originated in eastern France or western Germany. There is a German village of Weil, situated near Basel. If the family took its name from the community in which it lived, it was not an unusual occurrence. Compare Berlin, Berliner, Strasburger, Wormser and scores of other patronyms that have derived from place names."

"A story that the Rabbis tell of the derivation of the name is that it stems from the priestly family of Levites and is a sort of anagram of the word Levi. The German pronunciation of the letter W being V would explain this."

"Our father, Charles Weil, son of Alexandre and Caroline Mosser Weil, was born February 5, 1847 in Alsace. Of Charles Weil's own brothers and sisters, four besides him came to America."

"One of the bits of family lore told by our father, concerned his father and a brother who shared a home; one living upstairs, the other down. Each year -- or maybe it was three or five or seven -- the families changed quarters so that neither had better than the other. I find more than just a

quaint European custom in this story. Perhaps, in this share and share alike, is the foundation of the training we were given as children, a training that is manifest today in an intense love of brothers and sisters and a sharing of the material, as well as the joys and sorrows of life."

"From such a home, then, an eighteen-year-old boy sailed from Le Havre, January 19, 1866. The passport used (name, Charles Weil) shows that the voyage was via Liverpool; and many years later when citizenship papers were taken out they stated 'arrival on or about February 5, 1866,' his nineteenth birthday."

"Whether or not the ship went direct to New Orleans, we know that in that year, 1866, Charles Weil was associated with his (future) brother-in-law in a commission business -- mostly wholesale -- in Corpus Christi, under the firm name, Frank and Weil."

"This was before the days of railroads in South Texas. Merchandise came by steamer to Aransas Pass where it was transferred to lighters -- shallow draft vessels that could navigate Corpus Christi Bay. The invoices list among other items: leaf tobacco in hogsheads, and sheep dip. There was no white sugar. Brown sugar was packed in barrels, kerosene was in the square five-gallon tin that was a familiar receptacle in my childhood. Fancy groceries were only available during the winter as there was no ice."

"The chief trade was with Mexican ranches. The Mexican silver dollar was the medium of exchange, brought into the country in nail kegs in the heavily guarded, high-wheeled Spanish carts. In respect to this Mexican trade, it is interesting to note that our father said he never lost a penny on a Mexican customer. The same could not be said of Americans."

"In 1878 the Texas-Mexican railroad was built as far as Banquete. When it finally reached Laredo in 1881, it was the beginning of the end of Corpus Christi trade with Mexico as wagon trains went only as far as the rail heads. Business declined in Corpus Christi and some of the merchants moved to Laredo." (71)

Jeannette, the sister of Charles Weil, married David Hirsch. In 1869, they arrived in Corpus Christi and included in the family were David's niece, Saera Hymans, and nephews Joe and Charles.

"On May 11, 1873, Jeannette Weil Hirsch died of puerperal fever, following the birth of her son, Joseph. Her body was taken overland to the family burial plot in Gonzales." There was no consecrated Jewish cemetery in Corpus Christi and, because of this incident, Capt. Richard King donated the land for Hebrew Rest Cemetery.

Charles Weil married Saera Hymans in January of 1874 at Market Hall. The wedding was performed by a Justice of the Peace. On a later trip to New Orleans to visit relatives, Mrs. Weil was encouraged to be remarried by a rabbi, "...a proposition which she quite definitely refused."

"Returning to Corpus Christi (from New Orleans), the boat was not allowed to land because of a Mexican raid. Papa was among those guarding the town. This raid was March 26, 1875, in Nuecestown, a settlement on Upriver Road east of Calallen."

In 1902, Charles went into the cattle business and his sons, Moise, Alec and Joe, started a grocery store. Later, they bought the first Handy-Andy franchise in Corpus Christi and built four of the stores around town. They were unusual because they were 'self-serve'; previously, patrons waited while a store assistant gathered goods.

Simon and Sylvan, also sons of Charles, went into business with a man from Germany and helped him start a new store in Corpus Christi -- Lichtenstein's.

Charles Weil died September 5, 1918. Shortly after, Saera approached the Corpus Christi City Council with plans for a park she wished to donate to the city in her late husband's name. She had hired a landscape architect from Chicago to draw up the plans which included a ballpark, tennis courts, wading pools and flower gardens. The site was chosen from Weil land and included much of what today is South Bluff Park. Mrs. Weil invited the council members to her home to discuss the gift. Her grandson, Charles B., recalled the story.

"They came out to her home and she made them coffee and showed them this plan. She said, 'I would like to build this park and give it to the city. I have arranged for funds that will be held by one of the banks and it will supply enough money for perpetual upkeep of this amount of land -- at no charge at all to the city. I won't ask the city for anything except that they change the name from the proposed South Bluff Park -- that you hope to build someday -- to the Charles Weil Park. It will be on a wrought iron gate at the main entrance and that's all. No histories, nothing cast in stone, just let it be known that it's the Charles Weil Park and dedicated to the people of Corpus Christi in memory of Charles Weil, an early native.'"

"They thought it was a wonderful idea. They would take it under consideration and be back to her in a day or so."

"They called and said, 'Can we come out?' They told her they thought it was excellent and they wouldn't change a thing and they would be delighted to accept it but for only one small change: they asked her to change it from Charles Weil Park, to leave it South Bluff Park. Many people might object to

a project that large being named after a Jewish gentleman. She said, 'No. Just cancel it all. Thank you, gentlemen, for considering it.'"

"In those years the Ku Klux Klan was very active in Corpus Christi. The family thought it was more of a political gesture than anything else. At least that was the talk that I heard as a little boy."

By the 1930s, Charles B., grandson of Charles, was helping in the family grocery store downtown. During the Depression, there were transients coming through seeking work. Although there were some jobs available, there were many people who had got stranded without any means of returning home. Many transients stopped in at the grocery store asking for food or money. Charles B. Weil recalled: "We had one employee who took an hour off each morning and filled little bags with a can of sardines and a box of crackers, an apple or an orange, a few cigarettes, and a penny box of matches. These people would come in and, instead of giving them money, we would give them these little bags. Then my father and uncle decided something ought to be done."

"Every day in a grocery store there's a certain amount of food that is still very good to eat, but is not saleable due to appearance. They talked it over among themselves and went in to talk to the Salvation Army and asked them if, in the event the Weils could supply a building that would be large enough and would arrange for free gas, free electricity, free rent, free food... could the Salvation Army operate a soup kitchen? The Salvation Army said, 'Certainly, and it's needed here.' So the Weils supplied the building -- it was right across the street from where the La Retama Library is now."

"They had to serve two meals a day, and there was always coffee. At lunch they served a good soup, meat and vegetables, and they served pinto beans that were cooked with salt pork and onions, bread and a glass of milk.

Then they served the same thing at night for dinner -- or supper I think they called it in those days -- and it was a hugh success."

"I remember the one story about the Jewish fellow that came in. I went up to him and asked if there was something I could do for him, and he said, 'I want to see one of the Mr. Weils.' I said, 'I'm Charles Weil, can I help you?' 'I want to see one of the older Mr. Weils, please.' I recognized by his clothes and his appearance that it was for a handout, so I said, 'That's Mr. Alec Weil over there.' I walked over to be close in case he might need a little help; not that there was ever any real trouble, but once in a while something would come up."

"'Mr. Weil, my name is Cohen (or Aaron, something like that) and I need some money. I'm trying to get from the Valley back home to Brooklyn. I want some money, to eat, and money for the train.' My father said, 'Well, if you go to the next street and talk to Mr. Wolfson -- I believe that was his name -- he is head of B'nai B'rith.' (The organization had arrangements to get money to pass these people out of Corpus Christi, at least as far as San Antonio or Dallas, where the local chapters would send them on to St. Louis. They realized the transients had no business down here.) Then he said, 'I've already been to see Mr. Wolfson and he's given me a ticket on the train tonight to go to San Antonio, but I want some money to get something to eat.' My dad said, 'If you go down to the corner, one block down, there is a very good soup kitchen. You get soup, food, coffee, whatever you want to eat. Your train doesn't go until nine o'clock; you have plenty of time to get your supper there.' 'Mr. Weil, you don't understand. I'm a Jew.' My father said, 'Yes, I know.' The stranger said, 'Mr. Weil, you wouldn't send a Jew to a bunch of *goyim* would you?' Now *goyim* is slang for Gentile, Jewish slang.

He said, 'If you are hungry, you'll go down there. I'm not going to give you anything. You've got all the food you want to eat and transportation out of Corpus Christi.' He said, 'I refuse to go. You've got to give me some money.' My father said, 'I'm not going to. Go sit down and I'll talk to you in a minute. I'm busy right now.'"

"So he went back to his office and called the police department: 'I've got one here I want you to get out of town for me.' 'Certainly, Mr. Weil.' He went back to the man and said, 'I've talked to some people and they're going to come down. They're going to take care of you.' A few minutes later, a police car arrived. Two men came in as my father said, 'These people will tell you how they can help you.' They said, 'Come with us, please.' And they walked out and put him in the car. They took him out to the Causeway and said, 'You old so-and-so, get out and walk!' There was no foolishness about it, that's the only way it would work."

The religious life of South Texas Jews in those years was nurtured by individual families who held gatherings in their homes to commemorate holy days. As early as 1875, there was interest in building a temple,* but the Jewish community was too small to warrant one. In an article published in the American Israelite Periodical, June 27, 1875, the correspondent described Corpus Christi and the Jewish community:

> *I presume you have scarcely heard of this delectable place, except perhaps as a place infested with Mexican robbers and cutthroats. Be that as it may; ponder well over the cognomen of the place, and then know that within this body of Christ there lives no less than forty-five Jews and Jewesses, adults and children, a goodly number for an out-of-the-way town on the Texas frontier. Most of these have come here, some with their*

* Generally, the term 'temple' is used by Reform Jews; 'synagogue' by Orthodox and Conservative.

families, within the last five years, while others have married here, until now we number eleven families. (72)

As noted earlier, Rabbi Cohen of Galveston would often visit and, in 1912, was invited to organize a congregation. Problems arose between those who preferred the Reformed ritual to Orthodox and the project was postponed. (73)

By 1913, a synagogue had been organized, but no information exists as to the location. (74) The Jewish population had grown to 100.

Throughout most of the 1920s, rabbis from San Antonio and Austin were brought in to conduct services for the High Holy Days.* In 1928, the congregation that became Temple Beth El was started. Land was purchased for the site of the Tabernacle and, in 1931, construction began.

On March 7, 1932, two years after the wooden Tabernacle had been erected, a meeting was held by the Jewish people here for the purpose of formally organizing a congregation. It was resolved by popular vote that the congregation adopt the Reform ritual, with the understanding that any individuals who desire to wear the Yarmulke and/or Tallis would be privileged to do so. So it was specified in the Constitution which was adopted at that time, but there were a number of Orthodox members who maintained their own subsequent services during the High Holy Day Season at both the home of the Goltzman family and Meuly Hall. (75)

Charles B. Weil recalled his father's involvement in the establishment of Beth El.

"Now the story of how they built the first temple is very interesting. It was my father (Alec Weil) who decided it was too late for his sons -- my

* The first ten days of *Tishri*, the first month of the Jewish calendar. The period begins with *Rosh ha-Shanah* and ends with *Yom Kippur*. It is a period of introspection and reflection and ends with the reaffirmation and celebration of the new year.

brother and me -- to get any good out of going to Sunday school. We were past the age. But it certainly wasn't too late to help the people, and there were more and more (Jewish) families coming in all the time."

"There were the two factions: there were the Reformed and the Orthodox Jews. There are really three factions: Reformed, Conservative and Orthodox. The Reformed are the people who eat pork and don't necessarily close their stores on the High Holidays. They're not as extreme in their belief and in their customs as the Orthodox, who are extremely strict in many ways and in many things. The Conservatives are half and half..."

"So he talked it over with his brothers and others of the Reformed group. While there was no group, they did have services once a year during the High Holidays in a rented building they were able to get, and had a young rabbi, a student from the Rabbinical College in Cincinnati, come down and give these services."

"He told them he had a plan. They would all chip in and build a temple. It would only be large enough to house one of the denominations. They said, 'Oh, yes, we'll help and we can get a good Yiddish rabbi. We can have this, that and the other.' My father said, 'Now wait a minute. This first temple must be along the Reformed lines. We have not been fortunate enough to go to school in Europe -- Germany or Russia -- or even in the East where some of you are from. We don't speak Hebrew, we don't speak Yiddish. We wouldn't understand. Why should we go and not know what you're talking about? Why should we pray when we don't know what the prayers are saying? And we are too old to learn. You can understand English, so we would suggest, if you are interested, we will have a Reformed rabbi and we will worship together. It's possible at times you may want to have a special service all in Hebrew,

and we would be able to handle it. But definitely it will be a Reformed temple. Then, when there are enough of you to support your own temple, we will help you build it, just the same as you helped us build this.'"

"They said, 'Fine.' They all got together pledges; they said, 'Let's start.' My father said, 'Pledges don't mean anything. Get the money.' And they collected the money. There was never any burning on the mortgage or the notes or anything like that. When they had enough money to build it, they built it. The little Temple Beth El -- it's there today. It's been remodeled once or twice. There were great donations given for the ceiling and windows and so forth, as done in all churches, as memorials to the dearly departed. Now there are two temples, one Reform, one Orthodox."

In his interview, Weil emphasized that he was "a neophyte as far as religion goes." While his family was active in the Jewish community, he did not receive a traditional Judaic education. Still he considers himself Jewish and the absence of formal religious training has not altered his beliefs. He is aware of the misinterpretations some non-Jews hold: "A lot of people seem to think that if you're a Jew then you are an Israelite, which is not true at all. I have a great love for all religions. I've often repeated what my father said: 'Religions are like the stars in the sky and there are that many of them. All of them are shining on one central aim -- a road from this point to the heavens. Everybody believes his road is the best. They'll go the way that they were taught. It doesn't make any difference -- they're all going to the same place.'"

Harry Trodlier of Sinton, whose father immigrated from Russia around 1908, expressed a similar philosophy about Judaism.

"Any religion should be a way of life and whatever you learn in your religion becomes a way of life. It dictates how you treat other people, how you act towards your fellow human being and how you live your own life. I think all religions are basically sound. I don't believe in the philosophy that if you don't go along with my religion, you're not going to heaven."

"What does it mean to be a Jew? Of course, we're talking about being a Reformed Jew. To me, it's a religion that keeps up with the times. It progresses along; you live by a certain standard and as the world standards change, you have to take time and rethink your religion. It's a thinking man's religion, it's not just rote. It's a religion that you take and you compromise, you work out and you live with. I couldn't think of myself being any other religion because I like to think of why I'm doing something, not just be dictated to."

"We have rabbis, but they're teachers. Yes, he leads us, but he's a teacher. Any one of us should be able to go up on that pulpit, or at home, and conduct our own service. This is where we are falling down and this has happened with this generation of children; they are not learning. Somewhere we have fallen down."

"My wife and I go to services every Friday night. We took our children. We'd go to Corpus Christi. I finally had someone ask me -- one of the good Jewish members there -- 'What? Have you done so terrible a sin that you have to go every Friday night?' He didn't understand that, to me, it was important that my children get a basic knowledge of Judaism. How else were they going to, without exposing them? We took our children to Sunday school; that was something very important. They went to the Hebrew school twice a week so they could be Bar Mitzvah and Bas Mitzvah. Sure, there were a lot of trips to Corpus Christi."

A traditional education was part of Harry Trodlier's own upbringing, although the Jewish community of Sinton was very small. His father, Nathan, was the first Jew to settle there, in 1919.

Nathan had started working in New York City immediately upon arrival in America. "I remember my father telling me his first job was working in the streets, paving streets, beating rocks up. Back in those days, they didn't really pave, they just carried rocks and laid them down. I believe he told me they made somewhere around a dollar a day."

"He managed to save enough money and by about 1914, he had enough money to bring his two sisters over, so he had his two sisters with him in New York."

"They were all working, doing all right. He told me he was walking down the street one day and he ran into a friend from his home town. They called them 'landsmen' -- that is somebody from the home town. Of course, they hadn't seen each other in years, so they threw their arms around each other and were talking. My dad said, 'Well, what are you doing?' and the friend said, 'Well, I'm getting ready to go to San Antonio.' My father asked, 'What are you going to San Antonio for?' 'Well, my brother's there. Why don't you come with me?' And Dad said, 'You know, I think that's a good idea. I'll just go with you.'"

"He didn't have any money, so he hocked all their furniture and he hopped on a boat. They left from New York to Galveston; they paid $25.00. He arrived around 1915. He went to San Antonio to work in a clothing store. It wasn't any time until he had his two sisters there in San Antonio with him. First thing you know, he bought a little store of his own."

"Then the War came along (World War I). He enlisted and his sisters ran the store. After the War, he came back to San Antonio, then he went to New York for a visit. There he was introduced to my mother, who had come over from Latvia. They got married in 1919."

"Then they came to Sinton, Texas. Back in those days, they had bumper cotton crops. So he came and bought a store from Mr. Odem -- this grocery and clothing store. He finally got rid of all the groceries -- he didn't like messing with hog lard and bacon; he just wouldn't touch it."

"Sinton was the Ku Klux Klan center of this part of the country. It was strong when he first came down here; nobody would rent him a house. So Mother stayed in San Antonio and he stayed down here. In 1920, there was one lady here in town. Nothing scared her, bless her heart -- very independent soul -- Mrs. Zuri Stembridge. She walked into his store one day and says, 'Mr. Trodlier, I understand you're looking for a house.' He says, 'Yes, I am.' She says, 'Well, I've got one next door to me. I'll just rent it to you.' He says, 'You understand that you're asking for trouble.' And she says, 'It doesn't make any difference. You look like a good, honest man.' Back in those days there were some nice people, too."

"Of course, there was also a very strong Catholic contention here in town. The Odems on one side and the Ku Klux Klan on the other. It was quite a rivalry. Whether it was politics or what, it was awfully strong. Dad did bring Mother down here with my sister and moved into the house Mrs. Stembridge had. It so happens, I was born in that house."

"The story goes that the Ku Klux Klan had made some threats and she sent the word out. 'Now I want to tell you something. If you want to come and bother these fine people, just come right on ahead. But I'm going to be

sitting at the door with my shotgun.' They never did bother us. She was our guardian angel for a good many years."

"Times were rough and Mother worked in the store. I can remember us kids hanging around. Mama would cook on a hot plate in the back. Dad was doing anything he could to make a living. He would pack up his car with pants and shirts during cotton season and I'd go along with him. He would go from farm to farm trying to sell something, just to make ends meet. Times were tough. I remember I used to sell ball gum -- they called it 'Chick-a-lee' -- just little round balls you got out of a machine. I don't know how I got into it, but I started buying this ball gum and going along with Dad and sometimes I'd make more money selling ball gum than Dad did selling clothes."

"I guess we lived typically around here. We had our little garden, and we had a cow and chickens; we didn't starve to death. The prejudice was here, there was no two ways about that. My sister lived through it and I lived through it. I don't know that the Klan leaned strong. They just marched down the middle of the street in their robes."

"Back in those days, the Grossman's had a store; Simon Grossman. He brought over his young brother, Dr. David Grossman. Of course, my dad sort of looked after them. I remember Dr. Dave and I -- years ago -- were talking about it and he said, 'Aw, I knew every one of those Klansmen.' I said, 'How did you know that?' He said, 'Well, I sold them all shoes and I could just look at their feet and tell who was who. I would look and say, that's so-and-so.'"

"There were several Jewish families on and off here in town. I didn't know too many of them; I was just a small child, but there was a family that had a store two doors down. Their name was Gerrinski."

"There wasn't much Jewish life here in Sinton. We all went up to Corpus. This was ritual. Every Sunday we would pack up and go to North Beach. Now North Beach was the place to be -- not only for the Jewish community, but for everybody."

Nathan eventually brought his wife's relatives to Sinton, and opened another store for them to manage in Odem. Uncle Sam, Harry's great uncle, was his tutor. "Uncle Sam never could make a living. He was highly educated and a deep thinker, just one of those people in the good Jewish tradition. They believe in studying, not working. Dad brought him over just to teach us Hebrew, and of course we didn't have enough sense to take advantage of it. I still remember a little that he taught us. For a year or so he stayed around. He lived in Odem and would come over to teach us. By that time, it was my sister, my brother, and myself, and we would get together and have a class every day."

Within the family, religious holidays were observed. "We had Passover and the High Holidays. Dad always belonged to a synagogue, usually in San Antonio rather than Corpus Christi. I think Corpus Christi was a little too 'Reformed' for him, so we always managed, during the High Holidays, to go to San Antonio. His sisters had married by then and had houses and that was a place for us to stay. We would always manage to have Passover here. I say here -- usually we went to Odem for Passover. I think it was because my aunt was a better cook, had more time to cook. We managed to keep up our religious observances. It was important to the family."

One of the most enduring Jewish customs, found in religious and non-religious families as well, pertains to names. "According to the Jewish tradition -- I think we may be getting away from it, but not my family -- we

always name children for somebody who has passed on. I'm named after my grandfather, and my father was named after his grandfather. For instance, my dad's father was named Aaron Trodlier and my mother's father was named Isaac. My real name is Isaac Aaron Trodlier -- don't ask me why they call me Harry! I'm listed as Harry Trodlier in English, but according to my Hebrew name, it's Isaac Aaron."

"My son is named after my brother who was killed in the War and he had been named after a grandfather. So you can always trace back. We will not name after the living. You want to remember these people."

"Now our daughter is named Marsha Sue Hope. Her Jewish name is Sarah. The Hope stands for Hermenia; her mother had a brother who passed on, and his name was Herman. The Marsha we just threw in; we happened to like Marsha. She has a son. My father passed on and his name was Nathan, so their son is Daniel Nathan. Eventually, you can trace the history of a family through first names."

"In the synagogue, I would be introduced as Isaac Aaron Ben Nathan: Isaac Aaron, son of Nathan. Last names just happened to pop up in the Middle Ages. The last name was usually the type of work you did. For instance, Goldsmith was a man who worked in gold. I've often wondered what the name Trodlier meant. From what I understand in Russian, Trodlier means 'a blacksmith.' That makes sense, since my grandfather was a blacksmith."

Whenever it was possible, Nathan would make trips to New York to visit friends. On one trip, he was visiting with some landsmen and one of them told him, "'By the way, Nathan, I want you to know somebody's looking for you.' Dad said, 'What are you talking about?' The friend said, 'Look here. There's an ad in the paper: Anybody who knows the whereabouts of Nathan

Trodlier, please notify me at the Hotel New Yorker.' Dad says, 'I don't know who it could be.'"

"So he makes the phone call and the first thing you know here comes this young man. He throws his arms around Dad, shouting, 'Uncle! Uncle!' Dad says, 'What are you talking about?' It turns out, this young man was indeed Dad's nephew from South America. (Part of the family had gone there from Europe.) They'd lost touch. They didn't know what had happened to each other. But this young man was in New York and his father told him, 'When you go, you put an ad in the Yiddish paper. Don't come home 'til you find my brother.' So that's how my dad found his family in South America."

When Harry was in high school, his father decided to move the family to San Antonio. "Dad decided that it was time we got exposed to more Jewish people, and we moved in 1937. I went my junior and senior year there and then to A & M. Finally, I came back here after the War."

Most American Jews knew little of the Holocaust during the War years. Harry recalled, "There was no report of it. I think it was known, but the newspapers didn't say a word about it. Nothing. I don't think we really found out too much about it -- the average person -- until after the War."

The Holocaust is a current reality to the Jewish community; it is not a distant tragedy in their long history. Nearly all Jews had relatives among the millions that died. A theory on the Holocaust is being purported by the American Nazi Party under the guise of the Institute for Historical Review. They claim that it never happened, that it is an incident fabricated to gain sympathy for the Jews. The fact that three million Christians were also victims is not discussed. The propaganda is obviously an attempt by the organization to absolve Nazi involvement and to gain publicity. It could also

serve to increase their membership by attracting those who may have had reservations about Nazis, due to the War, and those who are strongly anti-Semitic. Whatever the motivation, the propaganda does indicate the intense discrimination Jewish people still endure. The racist theory that the Holocaust is "hype" pushed by "Exterminationists" is absurd to most people, but school districts in certain parts of the United States have banned The Diary of Anne Frank because of the claims that it is a "hoax." (76)

Although the Holocaust is a painful subject for Jews, most feel it should be taught in the schools and dealt with openly. To forget would be yet another injustice. It should be remembered not only as the epitome of racism but as a recent example of what one ethnic group has been forced to endure.

The endurance of the Jewish people is the greatest strength of the group. It has become a part of their religion as well as their ethnicity. Rabbi Sidney Wolf of Corpus Christi said that Jews have been called "experts in the future." The religion and philosophy of life emphasize the retention of hope for better times in spite of realities. "It is this hope," he said, "that makes the difference."

ENDNOTES: JEWS

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[3]Ibid, p. 28.

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[5]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 134.

[6]Interview with Peter Davidson, September 12, 1981.

[7]H. Jeremy Packard, The Fires of God: Minority-Majority Group Confrontation in America (Wellesley: Independent School Press, 1971), p. 135.

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[9]Ibid, p. 135.

[10]Ibid, p. 135.

[11]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 572.

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[23]Interview with Rabbi Wolf, (his home) March 23, 1981.

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[27]Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nichols and David M. Reimers, Natives and Strangers - Ethnic Groups and the Building of America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 238.

[28]Sharon Strassfeld and Michael Strassfeld, The Second Jewish Catalog (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976), p. 162.

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[33]Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nichols and David M. Reimers, Natives and Strangers - Ethnic Groups and the Building of America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 245.

[34]David B. Guralnik, ed., Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), p. 1654.

[35]Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 589.

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[54] Ibid, p. 596.

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[60] Ibid

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[67] History of Temple Beth El Sisterhood 1932-1972, p. 8.

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[70] Ibid, p. 10.

[71] Fanny Weil Alexander, Charles and Sarah Weil Family History, July, 1959

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[76] Institute for Historical Review advertisement

Mexican: The Spanish contributions to English are nearly countless, but there are some words that have unusual translations. The ten-gallon hats of Western lore are possibly derivations on the *sombrero galon* which was a Mexican hat with braided decoration. Barbecuing, long considered a Mexican invention, was actually introduced to the Spanish by Indians in the West Indies and originally meant the wooden framework used for cooking, drying or smoking meat.

Locally, the term 'Mexican-American' is preferred over Hispanic or Latin. 'Chicano' is a word derived from Aztec pronunciation of *Mexicano* that makes the 'x' sound like 'sh.' It used to be a term of derision, then came to be identified with La Raza movement of the 1960s. Currently, many Mexican-Americans associate the word with radicals.

1956 - Henry B. Gonzalez of Texas became the first Mexican-American elected to the United States House of Representatives. Prior to that, he had been the first elected to the state senate.

1964 - Joseph Montoya of New Mexico became the first Mexican-American elected to the United States Senate.

1971 - Ramona Banuelos, owner of a Mexican food factory in California, was appointed Treasurer of the United States. A few days before her confirmation, her business was raided and 36 illegal aliens were arrested.

1974 - Raul Castro was elected Governor of Arizona. Born in Mexico, he was the first Mexican-American to attain that office.

1977 - Gabriel Melgar replaced Freddie Prinz on Chico and The Man and became the first Mexican-American to portray a Mexican-American on a television series.

Leonel Castillo became the first Mexican-American Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization.

Asked if illegal aliens usurped the jobs of citizens, Castillo replied, "As best we can tell, there is no great rush of unemployed persons on the East Coast to go pick onions in 100-degree heat for three weeks."

In the Mexican community, the fifteenth birthday of a girl is an occasion for celebration. Her *Quinciañera* acknowledges that she is a woman and ready to begin dating. It is similar to the 'Sweet 16' debutante parties in the Anglo community. For many, the *Quince* is a very big, extravagant gala, comparable to a wedding in importance.

Everyone in the United States is familiar with some variation of Mexican food, although many of the entrees are a combination of Indian, Mexican and Yankee inventiveness. One specialty that most people do not associate with Mexico is the Caesar Salad, first tossed by Caesar Cardini in his Tijuana hotel. *Chile con carne*, however, was created by Mexicans in San Antonio in the late 1800s, and chili powder was invented by a German, Gebhardt, also in San Antonio. While Cortez feasted on tamales made by the Aztecs, so did John Smith in Virginia. The idea of corn meal stuffed with meat and steamed in a corn shuck was, apparently, known to most Indians.

When Antoñio Lopez de Santa Anna was arrested and sent to Washington, DC, after the Texas rebellion, he took his *chicle* with him. The chewing of this dried sap was common in Mexico and soon North Americans were developing a fondness for it, especially after manufacturers added flavoring. Soon, chewing gum was a national pastime and the brand name Chiclets reflects its Mexican origin.

from The Ethnic Almanac

In 1519, the Piñeda expedition landed on the coast of Texas and claimed the land for Spain. Piñeda was sent to seek a northwest passage from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific and to intercept the fleet of Hernán Cortes. Piñeda did not find a passage nor did he prevent Cortes from reaching Mexico, but he did map the coast of Texas.

In 1528, remnants of the Narvaéz expedition ran aground somewhere near Galveston Island. There were ultimately four survivors: Dorantes, Castillo, Esteban and the expedition's treasurer, Cabeza de Vaca.* For eight years, the group travelled throughout Texas and their experiences were recounted in a journal written by de Vaca and published in Spain in 1542.

Spain's motivation for the extensive exploration and colonization of the New World has been described as threefold: for glory, God and gold. The country was involved in numerous and expensive wars in Europe and needed money. The *conquistadores* were eager for lands, riches and fame and were certain of the righteousness of their actions.

> *All the Spanish conquistadores were marked in unusual degree by four dominant characteristics. They were ferociously courageous and audacious; they were the most successful explorers the world had ever seen. They were rapacious for fame and gold - but not curiously, avaricious, because they seldom held what they seized but spent gold prodigally. They were utterly racist in an unconscious way, never doubting Spanish superiority, not even*

*the matronymic of Alvar Nuñez

bothering to theorize it - but making the practice of their superiority none the less terrible to its victims. Finally, as a heritage of the Moorish wars, the Spanish were filled with the juices of religious crusade, the most hideous of all human conflicts. (1)

The Spaniards conquered with persistence, but their colonization efforts were less than successful due mainly to disinterest in the style of life required for settlement. They established forts and missions that staked out their territory and controlled the Indian population by force. They intended the power to rest in the hands of the central government; a government too far away to effectively control Texas. They were feared by the conquered people, but never truly respected.

In Texas, some of the forts also served as missions where priests taught the Indians religion and language, providing them with skills necessary for a "civilized" life of farming. The Indians who came to live in the missions were often the sedentary tribes, as opposed to the nomads, and had led precarious existences of constant warfare with stronger tribes. The Spanish offered them protection from their enemies while providing a fairly secure life. The Spaniards themselves were not settlers: "Those who arrived expected to live not off the soil but off the resources of a subject native population." (2) The rigid control of emigration, the isolation of the missions and the unrelenting threat of attack from tribes like the Comanche were all factors in the lack of strong Spanish settlement.

The Spanish were particularly concerned about protecting their border with French Louisiana and the permanent occupation of Texas was first attempted there. In 1690, a mission was established in East Texas by

Massanet. On the way to the site, horses and cattle were left at each river crossing to establish the herds that would feed and provide transportation for later explorers. From these evolved the longhorns and mustangs, symbols of Texas and the West. (3)

By 1693, the East Texas mission had been abandoned; it was too far from government offices. In 1716, however, interest in the region revived and the Spanish returned. The same year, Fray Espinosa recommended that a mission and presidio be established on the San Antonio River and within two years, Mission San Antonio de Valero was founded. A town would later grow up there and eventually the mission would be remembered only as the Alamo. By 1731, all the East Texas missions were moved and ended up near San Antonio as San Francisco de la Espada, San Juan Capistrano and Nuestra Senora de la Purisima Concepción. (4)

The failure of the East Texas missions signaled the failure of Spanish efforts in the New World. Spain's empire has been called "mythical: There was a tremendous difference between what Spain claimed and what Spaniards held." (5) The vastness of the alleged empire, the arrogance of the European toward the native population and the inability to govern adequately contributed to Spanish defeat. Texas historian T.R. Fehrenbach wrote:

> *The great failure of the missions was twofold. First, they could only be planted among the nonwarlike tribes (of Indians), and instead of forging them into a strong, Hispanic base able to defend the land, contact with the Spanish culture soon exterminated these. Second, the Spanish success in Mexico and Peru had come about because the Spanish were able to conquer the dominant people, or Amerind tribe, who already overawed all the rest. The dominant tribes in Texas were the Apaches and Comanches. The Spaniards were never able to conquer the first, and the second gave them the greatest defeat they ever suffered at the hands of*

natives in the New World. (6)

Unlike later European groups, the Spanish never allowed mass immigration to the New World. *Peninsulares* - Old World Spaniards - were a small per cent of the population and after the first fifty years of the conquest, most increase was due to intermarriage, not immigration. The *criollos* (creoles) were American-born Spaniards; the *mestizos*, an Indian-Spanish mixture, were the majority of the population. "By the time of Mexican independence from Spain, the creole count was slightly over a million, while European-born Spaniards totaled 70,000." (7) It was the creoles, however, that led the revolution and established the nation of Mexico in 1821.

The class system, racial prejudice, war in Europe and revolution in Spain combined to spur the Mexicans to establish their own republic. Like the Americans, they found the increasingly foreign control intolerable.

> *What Mexico owed to Spain...was a settled tradition of arbitrary rule based on force, of authority selfishly and often corruptly used, of the government as possessing the sole initiative, of social disunion resulting from privilege and monopoly, of personal successes frequently due to intrigue or purchased favor, of political indifference except among the controlling or aspiring cliques, of apathy concerning all high interests, of ignorance, inertness, fanaticism, hard oppression, blind obedience, passionate feuds and gross pleasures. (8)*

In throwing off Spanish control, the *criollos* also got rid of the *peninsulares* who had governed them. Many fled to the northern reaches of Mexico - to Texas - where they started over. Unfortunately, the *peninsulares* were the ones with knowledge of government; the *criollos* had ambition but

no experience.

> *By tradition and habit a people could hardly have been less suited for democratic government. Lip service was rendered to republicanism by aspirants for office; but the tradition of arbitrary rule and of the government as the initiating agency in change, was the guiding faith and practice of those in authority, modified, as necessity demanded, by individual rivalries and ambitions, class interest, and antagonisms. Though Republican in name, Mexico continued to express in unmistakable terms the Spanish traits of intolerance and supreme authority; these were too deeply rooted in tradition and practice to be readily discarded. (9)*

The new government of Mexico, although intending to emulate the American and French ideals of equality and fraternity, never put the theory into practice. The officials had no frame of reference to enable them to break away from the only style of government they had known.

The Spanish heritage in Mexico was extensive and deep. In addition to the obvious contributions of language and architecture, the Spanish influence on the culture directed attitudes, social mores and religion. The strength of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain was undisputed:

> *Roman power had been supreme in Spain through centuries sufficiently long for her to impress on the people of the peninsula Roman law and religion. Spain was Roman in language and culture. She became a supporter and the bulwark behind Catholicism in the Middle Ages, and was later the home of the Inquisition. (10)*

The Roman Catholic Church emphasized obedience of laws without question. The control that the Church had exercised for centuries inhibited desires for freedom and the growth of a society that stressed individuality. There was virtually no challenge to authority. The Church's power promoted

the government but the Pope in Rome was supreme ruler in all matters, religious and secular. In Spain, no religion but Catholocism was tolerated; the same was true in Mexico until the early nineteenth century. (11)

The new nation of Mexico promoted trade with other countries, principally the United States. The vulnerability of the northern provinces - so distant from the central government and so near the United States - became a major concern. The Mexican government was unable to convince Mexicans to settle where Indian raids and isolation were as critical a problem as they had been for two hundred years. In an effort to create a "buffer zone between central Mexico and the United States," Anglo-Americans were invited by the Mexican government to settle the northeastern frontier. (12)

Historian Samuel Harman Lowrie, in Culture Conflicts in Texas, presents three major reasons for the opening of the borders, an act that seemed diametrically opposed to previous policies on immigration.

> *For a long time the admission of foreigners to the Spanish dominions had been illegal...this policy was first departed from in admitting foreigners, including Americans, who were thought antagonistic to the United States, to settle in Louisiana, in order that a buffer state might be built up to repel intruding Americans. (13)*

In September of 1820, just before the Mexican Revolution, liberals in Spain gained control of the government and passed a colonization law which opened up all Spanish territory "as inviolable asylum for...all foreigners and properties belonging to them." (14) The law did, however, forbid the introduction of slaves into the territory.

In December of 1820, before there was knowledge of the change in

policy, Spanish officials in Mexico granted Moses Austin permission to settle three hundred families in Texas. Because he presented himself as a Catholic and former resident of Louisiana, Austin was considered a Spanish subject; officials in Mexico were still operating under the Spanish-subject-only rule and would not have given permission to an American. "It is thus apparent that the original grant to Moses Austin was not based on the new policy of Spain." (15)

The Austin colony was the first formal and large-scale American settlement, but these colonists were not the first Americans to enter Texas. The filibusters - the adventurers who engaged in war with Mexico even though the United States' policy was peace - first arrived in 1785 led by Philip Nolan. His business, ostensibly, was "mustanging - gathering wild horses... and selling them...in the South,"(16) but he apparently had ideas about making himself "King of Texas."(17) In 1800, he encountered Spanish soldiers at the Brazos River and was killed in a fight. His men were captured; some were hanged and others went to prison. Nolan had been sponsored by General James Wilkinson who "became one of the greatest double agents - but not quite traitors - of all times." (18) He spied on the Anglos for the Spanish while working to separate Texas from Spain. He won British support for an American invasion of New Spain, then told the Spanish that the British were plotting against them. He got involved with Aaron Burr when he was Vice-President. Later, Wilkinson accused Burr of trying to separate the Louisiana Purchase from the United States, had him arrested and testified at Burr's treason trial. He was cunning but careful.

Wilkinson's niece, Jane, married another filibuster, Dr. James Long.

In 1819, the Longs, their daughter and a slave, arrived in Nacogdoches with the intent of establishing a republic, free and independent. Long's three hundred followers elected him president.

After numerous skirmishes with Spanish soldiers, the "Patriots" were surrounded and taken to a Mexico City prison. While Long was confined, the Spanish government fell and his co-commander, Felix Trespalacios, was made Governor of Texas. Soon after, Long was killed; some say it was accidental, others claim Trespalacios ordered it. Jane Long, alone at Point Bolivar with her child and servant, survived the winter and Indian attacks, then heard of her husband's death. She travelled throughout Mexico seeking punishment for Long's killer. She found sympathy but no support and moved back to Mississippi. Years later, she returned and was honored as the Mother of Texas. She died in Richmond in 1880.

There were many other filibusters who fought the Mexicans for personal gain and it was these Americans that Mexicans came to consider as typical of the nationality. Empresarios, such as Moses Austin and son Stephen, were conscientious and responsible in their colonizing efforts, but were up against an image of Americans that was becoming imbedded in the perception of Mexican officials.

In 1820, when Moses Austin arrived in San Antonio to request permission to settle three hundred families in Texas, General Arredondo, the very powerful commandant of the interior provinces, had told Governor Martinez not to let any North Americans into Texas.

> *Arredondo was convinced, rightly, that his major troubles in Texas came from Anglo-Saxon filibusters, not local revolutionaries. (19)*

Even though Austin carried papers proving he was a citizen of Spain, he admitted to Martinez that he was an American and Martinez refused to discuss anything further. Austin was ordered to leave San Antonio immediately or be arrested.

Upon leaving the Governor's office, Austin met an old friend, Felipe Enrique Neri, the Baron de Bastrop. General Arredondo liked Bastrop, Bastrop liked Austin, and within a few months, permission to settle the families was granted. On his way back to Missouri, Moses Austin became ill and died soon after reaching his home. His son Stephen, promised to carry out the commission.

Stephen Austin was welcomed by the Spanish authorities and, according to Fehrenbach, they "had a clear understanding on two matters: one, that the American colonists would be substantial, law-abiding people; and two, that the requirement of the Roman Catholic religion would not be enforced." (20) During the summer of 1821, Austin explored Texas for a suitable settlement site.

Numerous Spanish officials had recommended that North Americans be confined to certain areas - an indication that suspicion and distrust were strong. A captain-general, within whose jurisdiction the Austin colony existed, argued for the settlement's placement near San Antonio:

> *In the first place the colonists, being so placed, would be absorbed ultimately by the native inhabitants of San Antonio. In the second place, and more important, their contact with the United States would be broken by a wide belt of unsettled territory. (21)*

The suspicion some officials felt was not necessarily misplaced; the

United States was interested in Texas and had made numerous offers to purchase the lands. The acquisitions of Florida and Louisiana had not satisfied the Expansionists and they were clear in their objective to gain Texas in whatever manner they could.

An important treaty was signed by the United States and Mexico in January, 1828, fixing their boundaries and the issue could have ended there. Mexico, however, did not ratify the treaty within the agreed-upon time and the matter opened once again. In 1829, Andrew Jackson was elected President of the United States and directed an aggressive, brusque diplomacy. Anthony Butler was placed in charge of negotiations with Mexico and was told to offer "$5,000,000 for a line west of the Nueces, and set out to gain it by means foul or fair." (22) Although a treaty was signed and ratified in 1831, the lack of a survey kept the issue alive and the United States continued to offer to buy Texas. (This) "merely increased the Mexican conviction that the United States was faithless and determined to have Texas." (23)

The settlers in Texas, both North American and Mexican, may have been aware of their governments' negotiations, but were most concerned with handling frontier life.

In spite of feelings of distrust, the liberal policies toward foreign settlement continued after Mexico gained independence from Spain.

> *Mexico was moved by a feeling of appreciation and gratitude toward Americans, because of the aid they had given in the struggle against Spain. Likewise Mexicans felt a bond of friendship, if not kinship, bound them in their struggle for freedom and free institutions to a nation across their border, that had led in the establishment of free government. (24)*

The success of the American Revolution had set an example for oppressed nations world-wide; Mexico was no exception. Many nations, too, hoped that if they imitated the policies of the United States, especially those of open immigration and a republican government, that they would then be as great a country as the United States.

According to Lowrie, the new policy on immigration was inappropriate to the national disposition.

> *In Mexico as well as in Spain, this new policy was an attempt to establish from theory a practice which was contrary to past experience and the deeply embedded convictions and attitudes of the people. Distrust of foreigners and blind obedience to superiors were in Mexico a part of the folkways and mores, and were ingrained in the Mexican character. Intolerance of outsiders and outside things, and a centralized authority which required implicit obedience -- the opposites of individual freedom and initiative maintained through self-government -- were bases of Mexican thought and action which doctrinaire theories and the adoption of a new form of government could not destroy overnight. (25)*

It is possible that the Mexicans did not really know what kind of Anglo-Americans they were dealing with. The Mexicans were not given to protests or belligerence, and because this was their way, might have assumed all were like them. Perhaps they thought that once the Anglos were in Mexico, they would behave like Mexicans. The American frontiersmen waiting to emigrate, however, were a unique breed with a heritage that was the antithesis of the Mexican's.

The formation of the American's attitude began in England with the Reformation. In that time, a small and relatively weak country protested Rome's control over their lives after seeing the corruption in the Catholic

Church. Even the name of their new religion reflected their attitude: Protestant. Along with the new religion, the seeds of individuality were planted and discontent with the class system became more and more evident. By the time the English colonists arrived in America, they held "deep-seated notions of individual freedom." (26) The aristocracy also came to the New World, but the environment and raw life that all colonists encountered soon made clear the fact that the old systems would no longer work.

> *The primitive conditions of life in a new country, the essential need for every man to work in order to overcome the obstacles and dangers of nature and savage foes and to survive, the absence of laborers who could be hired, the relative absence of the means of comfort and luxury, the abundance of land which could be had almost for the taking, tended toward equality, and made it difficult for any man or group of men to succeed very long in asserting arbitrary control over the settlers. (27)*

Most of the colonists had been laborers in Europe and adapted readily to a rough, wilderness life. When "autocratic representatives of the crown" (28) continued to emphasize class distinctions, the people of lower classes simply moved further west, to the edges of civilization. Outside any settlements, these Anglo-Americans controlled their own lives, established government when necessary and were free of the restraints they had come to resent.

> *In the wilderness perfect equality reigned, except insofar as personal capacity and ability marked the individual off from his neighbor; and an attitude intolerant of all political discrimination grew up. (29)*

It was these people of the frontier that eventually threw off English

rule, declared their independence and established a separate nation. This achievement added to existing attitudes the conviction of self-righteous determination.

> *Above all else this frontiersman was an individualist: he was the equal of any man, free to do whatever he wanted to, to think as he saw fit, and to govern himself without interference from any outside authority...whether because of resentment toward so-called upper classes which looked down upon him as uncouth, uncultured and unrestrained, or the life of danger from savage and beast that he lived...he was belligerent. By expansion of self he identified national interests and his own...national characteristics and his own... As he was aggressive, so should the nation be. ...His national policy was rough, impatient of diplomacy in all forms, ruthless and militaristic. Within the nation unoccupied land should belong to him...nationally the United States should reach out and take that which destiny had obviously marked out for it... The frontiersman was not inclined to quibble about methods when confronted with a need.*
>
> *Finally, because of the limitations of an isolated experience, he was narrow and intolerant. Freedom and democracy...were the right bases of government, the only just ways; all government based on other principles was of a lower order, unjust and tyrannical. (30)*

Even if the Mexican government understood exactly who they were inviting in to settle, the sheer need for development would have probably dictated the same course. The Indians of the high plains, particularly the Comanche, were attacking settlers and ravaging missions, even those housing army troops. Farmers and merchants, those who had always tamed frontiers with plows and shops, would not venture into a region that the army could not secure. The Mexican government needed a buffer against the Indians. The Anglo-Americans knew of the Comanche but still wanted to emigrate. They would settle the area, take the brunt of the Indian attacks and make

the region safe for Mexicans; it was the same policy that had worked in Louisiana. (31)

The Mexicans were most interested in securing central and northeastern Texas; the Spanish had already settled the south. Along the Rio Grande, the towns of Reynoza and Camargo had been established in 1749; Mier in 1753; and Laredo in 1755. A province, called Nuevo Santander, had been defined by Escandon and reached from the Rio Grande to the Nueces. Within it, "3,600 Spaniards and 3,000 Christian converts'" had been settled. Parcels of land, called *mercedes*, were doled out and ranches appeared.

> *It was an organic, paternalistic, and quite rigid society that took hold of the Rio Grande and spilled over into Texas. It was permanent. The ranchero or hacendado and his vaqueros, both Indian and mestizo, rode together to the frontier to have and to hold, each according to his station, from this day forward. Both put a solid stamp on the south Texas frontier that was to last and last. (32)*

Given the attitudes of the Americans and Mexicans, a clash seemed inevitable. Their interests in Texas were as diverse as the embedded and ancient prejudices each held for the other.

> *There was a historic antagonism between the Hispanic and the English-speaking worlds, rooted in the collapse of the Middle Ages. The Puritan frontiersman still told tales of the Spanish Inquisition and thought of the King of Spain as the archtyrant; Charles II's officials were appalled at the energy of the Mammonite tendency to what they called 'piracy' of the Anglo-Saxon horde. (33)*

In the 1800s, most Mexicans lived in the towns of Bexar, Nacogdoches and La Bahia. The Americans lived on their lands and rarely visited the

towns. The social lives of the two groups were separate and neither had any real knowledge of the other. The attitudes and images born in these years of initial, though limited, contact between Mexicans and North Americans set deep in the minds of the groups. Each was convinced its opinion was correct and accurate and each was to pass on that opinion for generations.

In political or business matters, the Americans' contact with Mexicans was brief and superficial. Due to language barriers, most matters were handled by the empresario, like Austin, or one of the few Americans who spoke Spanish.

The Mexicans in close contact with the Americans were often servants or laborers. Again, language differences prevented any real exchange of friendship. Class or station differences also played a part in the lack of close relationships.

Historian Lowrie noted another factor separating the groups in Texas, as pointed out by Teran, "an observing and careful Mexican official," in a letter of 1828:

> *(In Nacogdoches) the ratio of Mexicans to foreigners is one to ten;...the Mexicans of this town comprising what in all countries is called the lowest class - the very poor and very ignorant. The naturalized North Americans in the town maintain an English school, and send their children north for further education; the poor Mexicans not only do not have sufficient means to establish schools, but they are not of the type that take any thought for the improvement of its public institutions or the betterment of its degraded condition...one insignificant little man...who is called an alcalde...is the most...we have here at this important point on our frontier; yet, wherever I have looked...I have witnessed grave occurences, both political and judicial. It would cause you the same chagrin that it has caused me to see the opinion that is held of our nation by these foreign colonists, since... ...they know no other Mexicans than the inhabitants about here... ...Thus, I tell myself that it could not be otherwise that from*

such a state of affairs should arise an antagonism between the Mexicans and foreigners, which is not the least of the smoldering fires which I have discovered. (34)

On the same trip, "a lower official who accompanied Teran... wrote thus of the Mexicans of Bexar:"

The character of the people is care-free, they are enthusiastic dancers, very fond of luxury, and the worst punishment that can be inflicted upon them is work. Doubtless, there are some individuals, out of the 1423 that make up the total population, who are free from these failings, but they are very few. (35)

Unfortunately, most comments indicating the Mexican attitude toward the Americans have either been lost or were never recorded: as noted earlier, the Mexicans in closest contact were often in subservient positions. From the records that do exist, however, it appears the Mexicans also differentiated between classes of Americans: the higher class was thought to be "industrious and honest" while the others were considered "lawless and criminal fugitives". In the same way that the Americans attributed certain characteristics to all Mexicans, all Americans were seen as "aggressive and unruly. These characteristics were later interpreted to signify disobedience and lawlessness for all classes." (36)

They only obey the laws which suit their fancy, laws which in substance are adopted from the United States, as may suit their convenience. (37)

One of the earliest issues of conflict was the handling of the Indians.

Mexicans usually attempted to buy peace with the Comanche or Apache, "submitting to abuses from them."(38) Most Americans found that intolerable, preferring to fight and kill every Indian they saw, suspecting the bravery of the Mexicans who chose other methods.

Letters written to and from Stephen Austin indicate a variety of opinions held by North Americans of Mexicans, none of them positive: "treacherous...an inveterate jealousy of strangers...ignorant, bigoted and superstitious...lazy...villainous." (39)

Mrs. Mary Austin Holley was "a cousin of Stephen F. Austin, a careful observer who had access to valuable sources of information." She is quoted by Historian Lowrie in offering an explanation for the supposed ingratitude many Mexicans were accused of:

> *An intelligent (Mexican) Indian being asked why his people had no sense of gratitude replied: 'It is part of our education, and incorporated into our religion, not to be grateful to Spaniards for benefits, because they are incapable of disinterested actions. Our fathers taught us that the white men, being more intelligent and cunning...circumvented, plundered, and enslaved...by duplicity, pretending to have their good in view, when their object was their goods and gold. Therefore, when a white man did an act of kindness to an Indian, he must be guarded against some latent design which he could not discover, and this shut out all sense of gratitude.' (40)*

Simultaneously, there was admiration for the talents of Mexicans: they were said '"to be the best hands that can be procured, for the best management of cattle, horses and other live stock,' and the best horsemen in the world." (41) Distinctions were made between classes - higher class Mexicans were considered intelligent, sociable and gracious - but often the

distinction was lost and negative attributes were assigned to all.

Mexicans, like the Spaniards, were aware of courtesy and held consideration of others as an important value. Americans, many of whom equated courtesy with an admission of inferiority, were by contrast impolite and rude. A subtle but important difference in the concepts of familial responsibilities is related in Culture Conflict in Texas:

> *One (Mexican) gentleman was shocked to find a (Anglo) mother had gone into Nacogdoches and had left two children of ten or eleven alone at the rural home and exclaimed, 'How strange are these people from the North'. (42)*

Overriding much of the American attitude was pity and sympathy. They felt sorry for the Mexicans who were controlled by the Catholic Church - "The clergy literally suck the blood of the unfortunate people" (43) - and ignored by an uncontrolled government - "As time went on...turmoil and revolution became the apparent characteristics of the Mexican government..." (44) The understanding given, however, depended to a great extent upon the prevailing political party of the Americans. If the peace party was popular, sympathy for the difficulties in establishing a democracy was strong. When the war party advocating an independent Texas arose, there was antagonism for the failure of Mexicans to govern properly. The shift was due to economic interests: "They were slow to take a side on which they had much to lose in case of failure." (45)

Most of the conflicts between Mexicans and Americans were based on opposing world views; the value orientations of the groups were diametrically opposed and neither could fully understand the other. The frames of

reference, the experiences of the peoples were such that they would have had to unlearn cultural responses they held in order to relearn how to react in this new situation. Neither group had the interest or desire to bend. The contempt Americans held for Mexicans was equal to that held for them, as exemplified by the rather facetious statement of Luis de Onis who negotiated the Florida treaty for Mexico:

> *They consider themselves superior to the rest of mankind and look upon their Republick as the only establishment upon earth, founded upon a great solid basis, embellished by wisdom, and destined one day to become the most sublime colossus of human power, and the wonder of the universe. (46)*

Although the North Americans had promised that, as colonists, they would become citizens of Mexico, convert to Catholicism and learn Spanish, it was clear that the acculturation process was not working. As a result, the Mexican government, perhaps fearing lack of control, instituted restrictions and laws designed to centralize its power. The Americans, naturally, saw this new attempt at control as a violation of the Constitution of 1824. (47) Most Americans were fighting for their rights as Mexican citizens as late as 1835, and were trying for reform rather than independence. The constant turmoil in the government, however, convinced them that secession, not reform, was necessary. There were many Mexicans who joined the Americans and shared their desire for a de-centralized government. Together, they became the Texicans, or Texans, and the secessionist revolt was carried out. (48) Texas was not the only Mexican state to attempt revolt. Other states also tried to break away and were unsuccessful, but the Texans could not be stopped.

After the Texan victory at San Jacinto, the Lone Star Republic was founded, headed by Sam Houston. While the new government collected itself, chaos reigned in South Texas.

Apart from the towns along the Rio Grande River, there was virtually no settlement in the northern regions of Nuevo Santander. There were ranches on lands granted by the Spanish to reliable men, such as Enrique Villarreal who held the Rincon del Oso upon which Corpus Christi is now located. For the most part, ranches such as Villarreal's were managed by a few *vaqueros* and servants who lived in *jacales*. The landowners visited rarely, perhaps at roundup, and departed soon after for homes along the Rio Grande.

The entire area was vulnerable to attack, and Indian invasions were common. "In 1812, extensive Indian raids swept away the cattlemen not only along the Nueces, but from most of the lands north of the Rio Grande as well." (49) The town of Palafox, near Laredo, was destroyed by Indians, probably Comanche or Apache in 1818. Peace was made with the Apache and Comanche in 1824 - it lasted until 1839 - but the Texas Revolution unleashed another set of marauders on the Nueces Strip, an area claimed by both Texas and Mexico, but protected by neither.

> *After the defeat of the Mexicans the people of the coast were suspected and disarmed by Mexico, and treated as enemies by Texas. Unarmed, unprotected by Mexico, war waged upon them by Texas, devasted by the Indians, they again fled from their ranches to the protection of the Rio Grande... The rich coast was a wilderness. (50)*

The first Texans into the coastal region were traders and, to varying

extents, smugglers. There was a certain lawlessness about them even though some, like H.L. Kinney and William Aubrey, helped settle the area and became respected members of the community. The first real settlement west of the Nueces was Corpus Christi, established as a trading post in 1839 by Kinney and Aubrey. It was "the only part of the disputed territory between the Nueces and Rio Grande over which Texas exercised any actual jurisdiction prior to the Mexican War." (51)

When ranchers retreated to the Rio Grande, the Texans managed to hang on through Indian attacks, and pressures from Mexican Federalist troops. Kinney, in particular, was adept at retaining friendly relations with both Mexicans and Texans. There were factions among the latter that fought Kinney, out of either "economic rivalry,"(52) - they coveted his lucrative business - or simply because they were robbers. The "volunteer companies" (53) roamed the region and preyed on everyone they found. In a letter of 1841, Kinney described them:

> *Having arrived home two days back we find as expected a gang of desperadoes on our frontier perfectly regardless of the rights of anyone, robbing indiscriminately and not wishing to know or hear of any orders to the contrary...(54)*

In the early forties, a proposal was made at the Texas constitutional convention to confiscate the lands of all those who had fought against Texas in the Revolution. This was aimed primarily at Mexican residents of the Nueces Strip. At the convention, there was a strong debate, with Horton arguing against the proposal:

I would ask gentlemen what protection we have ever given to the people residing in that section of the country?... When the Americans have gone there, they have preyed upon them; they have been necessarily compelled by force or otherwise, to give up such property as they had...when the Mexicans have come in, they have been necessarily compelled to furnish them the means of support... I am ashamed to say it, but I speak the truth before high heaven, bands of robbers have driven off their cattle by hundreds and thousands,... The cry is that they have taken up arms against this country. Against whom have they taken up arms? Against a set of robbers... Who would blame them?...I am ashamed to repeat it, such violations as have been committed upon females there, fix a blot upon the American character. And is their property to be confiscated under these circumstances? (55)

An example of the exploits of the robber companies was set forth in the experiences of Kinney with Yerbey, who led thirty men into Corpus Christi. The band stole one thousand dollars worth of "goods, cash and horses," kidnapped eight Mexicans and killed them all. (56) An argument over the distribution of goods arose and the one band split into two. Yerbey retained nine men; Ormsby, with seventeen, headed back to Kinney's ranch. Word reached the Rio Grande and in a few weeks, a contingent of two hundred Mexican ranchers arrived in Corpus Christi. Learning that Kinney himself was not involved, they overtook Yerbey's band and killed all but one man. Ormsby's group disbanded and the Mexicans returned to the river. (57) Such instances were not uncommon and served to incense both sides. Although most of the Texans involved were not entirely honorable men, they were able to stir up antagonism against the Mexicans who, many felt, had no authority to act as the law in a region that was not, in the Texans' minds, Mexico.

In 1840, General Canales attempted a "federalist revolution against the 'centralists' of Mexico." In present-day Nueces county, at Lipantitlan, he received military aid from Texan "Cowboys" and proclaimed the area the

Republic of the Rio Grande. The revolt was advocated by some Texans, but defeated the same year. By 1842, Canales was leading Mexican government troops. (58)

It was a confusing time - Mexicans and Texans fought amongst themselves, against each other and with each other, depending on the issue or rewards. When the United States annexed Texas in 1845, Mexico, who had never recognized the independence of Texas, considered the act to be larceny.

Between 1820 and 1877, the government of Mexico changed hands seventy-four times. The turmoil caused many internal, as well as external, problems. Treaties between the United States and Mexico were agreed upon but not ratified for years, leaving issues in limbo. Americans living in Mexico had made claims against the Mexican government in 1829 that were ignored until an international arbitration settled the issue in 1838. Mexico agreed to pay over two million in claims over a five year period, then after the third payment, suspended any further ones. The Mexican government was too unstable to hold any consistent policy, domestic or international, and the United States, in the throes of Manifest Destiny, lost the little patience that had been maintained.

When Texas joined the Union, the boundaries that the former Republic claimed had to be recognized by the United States as terms of annexation. Because Mexico also claimed the region between the Nueces and Rio Grande Rivers, President Polk ordered United States Army troops to march a "Corps of Observation" to Corpus Christi then on to the Rio Grande. (59)

General Zachary Taylor arrived in Corpus Christi in 1845. In April, United States and Mexican troops had a skirmish a few miles north of

Matamoros, on the United States' side of the river. Although provoked by United States presence, Mexico had, in the eyes of North Americans, started the war. (60)

By 1846, Taylor had defeated the Mexicans at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. He had trouble with his own troops, especially the Texas Rangers, who proved so unruly they were eventually released. There were also problems with deserters: the Mexican government offered 320 acres of land in Mexico to anyone leaving the United States Army. General Taylor wrote:

> *Soon after my arrival on the Rio Grande the evil of desertion made its appearance, and increased to an alarming extent... It may not be improper to say that...some of our deserters were employed against us, and actually served the guns in the cannonade and bombardment of Fort Brown. (61)*

The end of the United States - Mexican War did not end the problems. Texans and other North Americans became interested in obtaining land in the regions after national ownership was established. Since 1836, many Mexicans had sold their ranches; trying to maintain them in the face of constant uprisings, wars and unrest had proved difficult, if not impossible.

> *By the opening of the Texas revolution in 1835, every foot of land in present Nueces County had been granted in large tracts to Mexicans, who pastured their herds upon them. Two years before the Civil War (1859) all but one of these grants had passed into American or Americanized-European hands, and that last grant passed out of Mexican hands in 1883. (62)*

The methods by which these lands passed out of Mexican hands have caused controversy and resentment for centuries. Although there are

parallels in history - the losses sustained by the Tories after the American Revolution, for example - the belief that Texas was stolen from Mexican landowners has persisted to the present day. To insist that all lands were stolen is as erroneous as claims that none were; there certainly were instances of gaining land through fraud, intimidation and threat. At the same time, Mexican landowners could not know what would happen to their titles under the United States. Even if they were secure, there was the uncertain future under foreign domination; selling lands in the chaotic and war-infested Nueces Strip was, in most cases, a logical decision.

The Mexicans who suffered the greatest losses were not the *hacendados* but the owners of small *ranchitas*. These people were politically and legally naive, unaccustomed to having any voice in government, believing that the land would remain theirs because it had always been theirs. The laws, as interpreted by greedy frontiersmen, did not necessarily protect the Mexicans, especially when they had property someone else wanted. The Mexicans did not know English nor did they understand the intricacies of the American legal profession. As Fehrenbach states:

> *There was certainly ignorance on one side, and chicanery on the other, but the real problem stemmed from a continual change in sovereignty in this region: Spain to Mexico, and Mexico to Texas and then, to the United States. The English common law and Hispanic law conflicted, particularly on such matters as taxation, use and wont, and holdings in common, or ejidos. (63)*

One of the bitterest and bloodiest conflicts between Mexicans and Texans erupted over a land title and the method of sale. The land around Brownsville was originally part of the Espiritu Santo grant issued to Jose

Salvador de la Garza in 1782. In 1846, much of the land belonged to Doña Estefana Cortinas, (or Cortina), a granddaughter of the grantee and wife of the alcalde of Camargo, Mexico. Although the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo confirmed Mexican titles to lands in Texas, in reality the area was identified as public land under Texas law by right of conquest. (64) The old Espiritu Santo grant was filled with Texans and other Americans claiming squatter's rights. American lawyers arrived to straighten out the confusion and exacted three leagues of land from the owners; Doña Cortinas handed over four thousand acres to lawyers who were to secure her title to the rest of her inheritance. (65)

Charles Stillman founded the city of Brownsville on 1500 acres of the Espiritu Santo grant lands even though he held no clear title. The legal question eventually reached the Supreme Court, but was dismissed due to problems in jurisdiction. When a ruling was made in favor of the Cortinas heirs, the four thousand acres ended up belonging to a group of American lawyers who in turn sold it to Stillman at a very low price. Fehrenbach describes the situation:

> *The imposition of American law infuriated most Mexican landowners. They had to defend their ancient titles in court, and they lost either way, either to their own lawyers or to the claimants. In these years the humbler classes of Mexicans were finding that they were treated with contempt, and that the American law would not protect their persons; now the upper class felt that American courts were not upholding their ancient rights. The soil of the lower Rio Grande Valley was becoming ripe for revolution. (66)*

One of Doña Cortinas' sons, Juan Nepomuceno, was particularly angry about the methods the American lawyers used both in his family's case and

throughout the Valley. Juan 'Cheno' Cortinas was an unusual man of the time, a combination of classes: "He had the manners of a gentleman, but he was uneducated by choice, and a *vaquero*, rather than a border aristocrat, by personal taste. . He was intelligent, with a native cunning and deft political sense for the feelings of his own people; he was a fearless gambler, and certainly possessed a fearless manner." (67)

His first act of note happened in the summer of 1859 in Brownsville. One morning as Cortinas had coffee with friends, he witnessed the sheriff arresting a drunk Mexican man. Cortinas considered the sheriff's treatment unnecessarily harsh and intervened. The sheriff insulted Cortinas who drew, shot the sheriff in the shoulder, and rescued the transgressor.

Instead of pursuing Cortinas, the sheriff let him go; perhaps it was the high position of the Cortinas family that stopped him. In any case, Cheno spent the next few months with his *vaqueros* on both sides of the river.

> *It must be remembered that Cortinas was recognized as a Mexican citizen south of the river, just as his half-brother could serve both as a Cameron county official and a field officer in the Mexican army. Mexican officers, including one of his cousins, knew that (Cheno) was planning trouble, but could not persuade him to go on an extended trip elsewhere. (68)*

In the early hours of September 28, 1859, Brownsville residents were awakened by shouts of *"Mueran los gringos! Viva Mexico! Viva Cortinas!"* Cheno, with a hundred men, took over the town. Seeking to kill the sheriff and a landowner who escaped, Cortinas killed three others instead, "...for their misdeeds among the people." He also killed a Mexican, Viviano Garcia,

who was trying to shield an American friend. (69)

The city held until ironically, troops from Mexico crossed the border and liberated Brownsville. The townspeople were merchants, not frontiersmen used to gun fights, and they appealed to officials throughout the state for assistance. While waiting for help, a group of Texans and Mexican-Americans formed the "Brownsville Tigers" under the leadership of W.B. Thompson. (70) They went to the Cortinas ranch but left rather quickly when the firing started.

The Cortinistas raided the countryside, helping themselves to cattle and goods. They stole beeves belonging to James Browne, a man Cheno considered a friend, and Browne was reimbursed for the cattle. Cortinas' reputation as a bandit and prestige as a Robin Hood grew.

In response to the townspeople's appeals for help, the Texas Rangers, under Captain W.G. Tobin, arrived from San Antonio. In those days, the quality of the Rangers depended upon the strength of their leader; many of them were renegades more interested in fighting than in seeing justice served. Most historians concur that Tobin was not an effective Ranger captain as the first action by the Rangers in Brownsville indicates: They took a sixty-five year old Cortinista from his jail cell and hanged him. (71)

Soon after, Cortinas killed three Rangers and waited for Tobin at Santa Rita. Although the Rangers acquired a cannon that Cortinas had taken from Brownsville, they did not fare well in the fight, and "made Mexicans wonder how the gringos had ever got to the Rio Bravo in the first place." (72) There was talk of Mexico once more extending to the Nueces River.

Cortinas himself admired and respected Sam Houston, the governor of

Texas who swore to uphold Mexican-American rights. It appears, from history, that Cortinas was fighting for the rights of people, rather than for Mexican acquisition of Texas. It is also possible that he was fighting out of frustration and anger, with no real plan at all. In the end, his revolution failed from lack of strong support. Mexican-Americans did not join his cause - most of his band came from Mexico - and he alienated his own family.

By 1859, Cortinistas were considered bandits by Mexicans and Americans alike. Escaped convicts and thieves joined Cortinas and, some say, matched the calibre of men led by Tobin. Late in December, the United States Army arrived, fought Cortinas at Ebonal and defeated him. During that battle, Rip Ford, a respected Ranger sent by the Governor, reached the Valley with fifty-three men, all volunteers. (73) Late in the month, Ford and the army met Cortinas at Rio Grande City and the revolutionary was again defeated. He then headed south of the river, out of the United States Army's jurisdiction.

Riverboat captains Kenedy and King, later to become ranchers, had a steamboat that carried cargo from the Gulf of Mexico to towns along the Rio Grande. Since its cargo often was of great value, it was suspected that Cortinas would attempt a raid. Soldiers, along with Ford, Tobin and some of their Rangers, boarded the vessel and rode south across the Rio Grande.

Although the river was respected in Washington and Mexico City as the international boundary between the United States and Mexico, there were unofficial actions that were officially ignored. The case of the Mexican Army liberating Brownsville could be considered one. The governments did

not want to go to war again, especially over something that was not in either nation's interest, and Cortinas' raids were not considered to be of national concern to either country. The United States Army could not cross the river without creating an incident. The Texas Rangers, however, were not federal forces and tended to do what needed to be done; if reproof came, it was after the fact. The entire situation had gone on too long and most people felt the lack of attention, from both the United States and Mexican governments, was to blame. Both sides of the border suffered, homes were destroyed, crops and cattle lost. Mexicans and Americans alike were exhausted by the turmoil. If either government had accepted responsibility for policing the area, the Rangers would not have been necessary.

Forty-five Texas Rangers met Cortinas and his men - at least two hundred. During the battle, one Ranger headed north, to the safety of Texas, and Ford "restored morale" by promising that the next "who tried to race would have to outrun a Texas bullet..." (74) Cortinas' men, many of whom followed him out of greed, not ideology, fled. Finally, Cortinas himself escaped further into Mexico. The Rangers under Tobin burned *jacales* and Ford ordered them back to Brownsville; he and his men returned to the steamboat.

Before the episode was over, *Los Rinches* had terrorized the Mexican countryside, merely by their presence, and taken the town of La Mesa where Cortinas was reportedly hiding. In that battle, six Mexicans - one a woman - were killed, but Cheno Cortinas was gone. For days, the Rangers searched the border towns for the revolutionary and his men to no avail.

Ford's...brand of border diplomacy was halted by the arrival of the new U.S. Army commander in Texas, the Virginian Robert E. Lee. Lee had been sent specifically to the Rio Grande to halt the trouble, and he carried authority from the Secretary of War, if necessary, 'to pursue Mexicans beyond the limits of the United States.' He was commended to Governor Houston as an officer of 'great discretion and ability.' He proved it, quickly bringing the Cortinas war to a quiet end. (75)

The ultimatum that Lee delivered to Mexican officials in 1860 was simple: "If Cortinas were held in check, there would be peace. If Cortinas were allowed to raid, there would be war." (76) Lee earned the respect of border residents by giving it and noted in his report that an army of twenty thousand was needed to police the river from Brownsville to Eagle Pass. (77) He also pointed out that ranches in the region were in ruins: "Those spared by Cortinas have been burned by the Texans." (78) The flames of war had been put out; the embers survived, however, and would flare repeatedly for the next century.

Although the Cortinas war captured the attention of South Texas residents as far north as Corpus Christi, there were concurrent conflicts that added to the regional chaos. Mustangers preyed on the ranches too far north to attract Cortinas or the Rangers. The outlaws were described in 1855:

...composed of runaway vagabonds, and outlaws of all nations, the legitimate border ruffians of Texas. While their ostensible employment is this of catching wild horses, they often add the practice of highway robbery, and are, in fact, simply prairie pirates, seizing any property that comes in their way. (79)

Often these mustangers would disguise themselves as Indians and

confuse authorities.

A separatist movement had erupted in 1850, attempting to establish the Republic of Sierra Madre. Leader Jose M. Carvajal received support from Mifflin Kenedy and Richard King, but most of the Texans who joined were "young men whose tastes for civil pursuits had been destroyed by the Mexican War." (80) The filibustering endeavor was favored by many South Texans and the Corpus Christi Star newspaper printed editorials in sympathy with the movement, and quoted the New Orleans Delta: "The truth is, our government committed a great error in accepting the Rio Grande as the boundary line. We should never have stopped this side of that great natural boundary, the Sierra Madre range." (81) There were raids into Mexico by Texans and Mexican raids into Texas until Carvajal's forces were defeated in 1853. The issue did not die and for years after rumors of similar revolutions persisted.

In the meantime, Indian raids continued. The ranches of the Nueces Strip were within range of nomadic tribes and army forts were built to protect the region. Members of the war parties were not always Indians; witnesses attested to seeing Mexicans, blacks and whites in the bands. During May, 1861, fifty-two people were killed by 'Indians' in Nueces County. Attacks continued until 1878, when all Indians were forced out.

> *As the Indians were finally subjugated or driven out of the region, the chief emotional result was apparently to aggravate the unfriendliness toward each other of the two peoples who together were expelling or subduing the Indians. (82)*

During the Civil War, the city of Corpus Christi was held by Union

troops. The city was fired on by Yankee ships in the bay and many residents fled. Although the black population of South Texas was small, escaped slaves from East Texas made their way south, perhaps seeking the protection of the Federal Army. There were also fugitive slaves that headed to Mexico where they received sympathy and aid in their run for freedom. Slave owners made raids into Mexico to retrieve what they considered their property and tension increased.

Mexicans were disgusted by the institution of slavery and attempted to bar any pursuit across their border. Texans were incensed by what they considered aiding and abetting and could see no difference between slavery and the peonage system in Mexico. Peons in Mexico were those forced into servitude to work off debts. While the blacks headed south across the river, peons were fleeing into the United States to escape their creditors. Between 1848 and 1873, over 5,300 Mexicans ran to Texas and "the loss in unpaid debts was estimated at nearly $400,000." (83)(For related information, see Blacks in Texas.)

There was an attitude of superiority and a great deal of antagonism on both sides concerning this issue. Adding to it was the fact that Mexicans joined Federal troops to fight Confederates. At one point, Cheno Cortinas, the ex-revolutionary who had become governor of Tamaulipas, was reportedly poised to attack the Rebel forces at Brownsville.

With the end of the Civil War came unemployment and the confusion of Reconstruction. Simultaneously, the cattle and sheep industries, dormant due to shipping blockades, started up throughout South Texas. Many of the people who arrived in the area after the war, however, were not interested

in work as much as wealth. Ex-soldiers from the United States war and those from the armies of Juarez and Maximillian collected on the border:

> *...the ease of escape by crossing the river and the generally unsettled conditions of the region attracted outlaws and deserters from both Mexico and the United States. (84)*

Also attracting them was the Free Zone, a narrow strip void of customs duties that had been established by the state of Tamaulipas in 1858. Smuggling had been a way of life along the river, as well as further north, for years and many people profited from it. Merchandise bound for Mexico from the Corpus Christi port managed to get lost along the way and sold as contraband. The trade irritated Texans and this worried the Mexicans: they feared another "territorial aggression." (85)

The Texans were more outraged by the cattle raids in Nueces County. Hide skinners roamed at will, accumulating hides and inviting area residents to buy. United States Army Adjutant General Steele reported:

> *...some of the merchants of Corpus Christi are much to blame for their encouragement of this illegal traffic...small stores and peddlers have been started in trade by these merchants...and returns have been made in stolen hides, which have been shipped in various directions, as would best avoid detection. (86)*

Cattle owners hired small armies to track skinners, and depredations against innocent people, in the wrong place at the wrong time, were common. The son of Banquete rancher Martha Rabb was described as a "desperado and a murderer...the terror of his neighbors..." in testimony given in 1878. The

House Committee on Military Affairs was investigating charges and gained information on Lee Rabb from an area banker regarding Rabb's killing of Mexicans:

> *His so-called friends...banded together and killed quite a number of innocent Mexicans...I should say not less than forty. (They were killed) in Texas; on the ranches, roads, and wherever they were found...they were killed indiscriminately...the bands killed them just as they came across them. (87)*

Bandit attacks on innocent people were also common.

> *Mr. William Murdock, an old citizen, peaceable, quiet...was most foully murdered and burned on the evening of the 19th.....at his own residence... The fiends...who committed the act left the unfortunate man lying on his face with the arms bound with bed clothes and cultivating harrow thrown upon his body. He was literally roasted alive in his own house...(88)*

The entire region was possessed by the worst elements from either country, the scavengers that preyed on the rich and poor, killing for no reason at all. Already suspicious of one another, the Texans saw all bandits as Mexicans while Mexicans claimed no Texan could be trusted. It was easier to hate collectively than to try and differentiate between the good and the bad.

On Good Friday, March, 1875, the situation culminated in the Nuecestown raid. A band of eighteen or twenty bandits,apparently all Mexican, raided horses and other valuables from ranches near Corpus Christi. They moved on to Frank's store on the Juan Suis ranch. While the bandits gathered horses, saddles and other merchandise, travelers arrived and were robbed. Among

them were Mrs. Sidbury, H.A. Gilpin, S.G. Borden, "and a number of Mexican women and children." (89) At least twelve people were captured and threatened; Mr. Frank was stripped to his underclothing. Then "one of the robbers asked a Mexican (American) to join the party in their raid. He refused, ...a pistol was placed to his head, the trigger pulled, and his soul sent to eternity. It was a terrible, cold-blooded deed." (90)

The group left Frank's, the bandits driving their prisoners ahead on foot. The next stop was Nuecestown - referred to then as the Motts - and Noakes store. Mr. Noakes had been alerted and when the first bandit opened the door, he fired twice. A customer ran out and was shot down; the store was set on fire. Noakes and his family eventually escaped, but "the destruction of his property was so complete that the calves in the pen were roasted." (91) The women were allowed to go free and the bandits, with the male prisoners, left the Peñitas. On the way, they were met by a group of ten men from Corpus Christi who fought until their ammunition was gone. One bandit was captured, taken to Corpus Christi and hanged.

Over the next month, Texan retaliation was brutal and indiscriminate. At La Parra, a store was burned and many people killed. It was not only the Noakes raid they were avenging but the long history of "hide peeling" - the killing of cattle for hides. (92) The authorities undermanned and inexperienced, had not made any real attempt to curtail bandit activities. The Texans were fed up. The vigilante raids went on until Captain Leander H. McNelly, "of the reconstituted Rangers," (93) arrived in Nueces County and formed a Special Force of forty men. McNelly reported, "The acts committed by Americans are horrible to relate; many ranches have been plundered

and burned, and the people murdered or driven away." (94) As one of his men noted, most of the outrages had been against "peaceful Mexican farmers and stockmen who had lived all their lives in Texas." (95) For many, the possession of a new saddle was enough to be considered guilty of the Noakes raid.

The tension in Nueces was severe. Adjutant General Steele observed:

> *There is a considerable (Texan) element in the country bordering the Nueces that think the killing of a Mexican no crime... The (Mexican) thieves and cut-throats who have collected on the border think the killing of a Texan something to be proud of. (96)*

McNelly realized that the problem with bandits was emanating from the Rio Grande, not the Nueces, and headed south. What happened there over the next few months put an end to cattle raids but is a segment of history that may never be viewed objectively by Mexicans.

The United States Army at Brownsville had proven ineffective against banditry. McNelly knew what he was up against - old friends of Cortinas were in the 'cattle business' - and he had orders to "clean up the Rio Grande Valley." Until he did, the stealing of cattle would continue, upsetting the economic stability of South Texas.

The Rangers made numerous forays into Mexico and they made mistakes. A tragic one confused the names Las Cuevas with Las Cucharas and innocent Mexicans were killed. The fear and loathing of *Los Rinches* by Mexicans can be understood. What often is not realized is the fact that had the Rangers not gone in to deal with the problem, a civil war would likely have engulfed South Texas. It was an era that demanded action and often left

By the turn of the century, the sheep industry had waned; cattlemen did not believe sheep and cattle should run on the same range and the price of wool dropped. This tended to affect Mexican-Americans, who were the principal sheep-raisers, more than the Anglos, who preferred cattle.

> *In these changing industrial activities, the roles of Mexican (Americans) were chiefly those of vaqueros and pastores. A few... landowners had herds and flocks of their own, while a number of (those) landless pastured their own herds and flocks on the open range. (99)*

In the midst of the cattle and sheep boom, fencing became common and "brought about most profound social change." (100) Landowners saw a sudden increase in the value of their land while their stock enjoyed security. The landless pastores, however, were cut off from water and passage and had to move further west or quit the business. Similarly, those who owned land without water were forced out; wells were uncommon and costly.

The growth of the cattle industry underscored the need for efficient transportation to get the beeves to market. Beginning in 1875, merchants and ranchers started building a railroad from Corpus Christi to Laredo. The need for laborers counteracted the demise of the sheep industry and many Mexican-Americans worked on the railroad. The building of the railroad in South Texas attracted workers who had gained experience working the mines and railroads of northern Mexico. These factors all contributed to the large migration from Mexico in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The cotton industry did not get started until the late 1800s - the first experimental crop was produced in 1858 - mainly because the cattle

industry absorbed most interest and efforts. From the beginning, however, Mexican labor was used by cotton growers like S.G. Borden who stated in 1885:

> *I have employed in cultivation almost entirely Mexican laborers, who I find work well, and readily learn to use our improved tools. Such labor is abundant along the Nueces river and can be secured at 75 cents a day...(101)*

In these reports, it is not clear whether the workers were actually from Mexico or American citizens of Mexican descent. The distinction was apparently not made among the poor, but little distinction was made before immigration policies were strengthened. Travel back and forth across the border was common and easy and the need for laborers overran any objections to the flow.

At first, Mexicans came only at certain seasons, to help with the crops. At the border, guards sometimes had lists of area farmers and ranchers in need of laborers and would send the workers to them. Similarly, ranchers would wait at border crossings, hiring people as they arrived.

In 1910, President Porfírio Díaz was overthrown, and the government of Mexico was again in confusion. The United States sent troops under General Pershing to deal with Pancho Villa and the old wounds along the border were opened again.

Venustiano Carranza led the revolution in the north of Mexico and there was the inevitable overflow. Bandits, taking advantage of the chaos, raided again in South Texas. President Wilson sent army and National Guard troops; Texas sent Rangers.

The situation in Europe worsened and American involvement in the war seemed unavoidable. Some historians have suggested that the American troops were sent to Mexico to season them for action in Europe.

Exacerbating the situation was the question of Mexican loyalty to the United States. "Many Texas-Mexicans went south to avoid military service in 1917; at this time, even old families had not yet decided where their true nationality lay." (102) The Plan of San Diego, discovered in 1917, added to the suspicions.

Under the Plan, Mexico would reclaim Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas. Six other states were to be given to the Negroes, and all *gringo* males over sixteen would be shot. "Most authorities, later, suspected the Plan of San Diego was devised either by a German agent to stir up trouble at the United States' back door or by one of the many wealthy American landowners who were being dispossessed in Mexico at this time." (103) Whatever the source, the Plan combined with the Zimmerman Note - proposing an alliance between Germany and Mexico against the United States - to drive the wedge deeper into the Texan-Mexican division.

Anyone of Mexican descent was considered a threat and the Rangers upheld their reputation for 'shooting first, questioning later.'

> *Between 1915 and 1917...there were numerous cases of flogging, torture, threatened castration, and legalized murder. Even some of this was justified by events, since the Rangers faced some of the cruelest outlaws who ever lived. But enough of this reprisal fell on people innocent of any crime but the one of being Mexican to discredit the whole. (104)*

In 1917, the General Immigration Act was passed and closed the United

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States-Mexican border. This did not prevent crossing but made the trip more difficult for the workers. American employers protested and the government suspended certain provisions established by the Act - literacy tests, labor by contract and head tax - and Mexicans came to help meet the needs of a wartime economy. Between 1917 and 1921, 72,000 workers from Mexico contracted directly with American employers. (105) While these were legal, the job opportunities attracted thousands of illegal immigrants also. The workers, legal and 'wet', did agricultural labor or followed the crops as migrants.

The reasons given for coming to the United States, stated in From Peons to Politicos, described the situation further north, but the needs were universal:

> *First, they were looking for a better living and more money in the growing South Texas areas. Second, many also were seeking to escape the great turmoil caused by the Mexican revolution... Most of the immigrants emphasized the poverty and turmoil in Mexico and their hope that America would offer more opportunity. (106)*

Unlike other immigrants to the United States, the proximity of the 'old country' allowed a dual citizenship emotionally, if not legally. Even those who moved their families north usually settled in predominantly Mexican-American communities where the social and cultural roots survived. This was also true of the Mexican-Americans who moved from rural areas to towns and cities.

> *Whether the urbanizing Mexican American came from Mexico or from rural settlements in the United States, he had greater relative*

opportunity to become imbedded in a familiar pre-established social structure. Consequently, adaptation and adjustment problems undoubtedly required less inter-ethnic contact. (107)

While this absorption made the transition easier, it also isolated the immigrants from the host, or Anglo, society. There was little, if any, exchange of values, ideas and goals; the interactions necessary for acculturation and assimilation were absent.

At the turn of the century, the number of Mexicans entering Texas was relatively small:

In 1860, there were about 12,000 ethnic Mexicans in all Texas, all in the south-southwest. Between 1861 and 1900, approximately 334 Mexican nationals entered the United States annually; as many departed as entered. By 1900, immigration averaged 100 Mexicans per year. In 1900, 70,000 ethnic Mexicans lived in Texas, or less than 5 percent of the total population; only 5,000 lived in San Antonio, where they were still less numerous than ethnic Germans. (108)

The workers who came were, generally, not from the northern states of Mexico but from the central section most affected by the continuing revolution. Fehrenbach describes them:

They were predominantly Indian by blood, but long Hispanicized, and they fled from the Mexican regions where landholdings were the largest and conditions for the pelados, 'the skinned ones', were the worst. Thousands fled to escape debt peonage... These Mexicans entered a new country where most of the land and almost all the means of production were owned by Anglos. They were subjected to fierce exploitation, by American, but not Mexican, standards. Mexican laborers took jobs at 50 cents per day, but still, in a month, some earned more cash than they had seen in their entire lives. No Anglo-Texan could exploit this pelado class to the extent it had been exploited in Mexico for four hundred years. (109)

This statement underscores the desperation many Mexicans felt and the dread they carried of being deported. There can be no justification of the exploitation that did occur, instituted by people well aware of their actions. The motivation for low wages was greed - of the landowner and by businesses trying to induce settlers to South Texas. At the same time, Mexico saw the emigration as a means of relieving the economic pressures that could have led to social and political problems.

The Mexican-Americans were in competition with Mexican laborers and were forced to work for the same wages, if they were to work at all. Eventually, many Mexican-Americans took the migratory jobs, having been displaced by Mexicans in South Texas. (110) The Mexicans, staying in an area dependant upon agriculture, became share croppers and cotton pickers.

Under one share cropping system, the landowner provided animals, tools and plow to the tenant who worked the land for a percentage of the crop. Another system, prevalent after 1910, provided the tenant with land only; he used his own equipment and shared in twenty-five percent of the crop. More often than not, the landowner would arrange credit with local merchants for the tenant.

> *This type of share-farming operation was very much of a family-based labor system. Anglo growers emphasized that the bigger the family the better the tenant. Big families provided more labor. They generally worked harder and stayed longer because they were perpetually in debt to the local merchants. (111)*

This, the *patron* system, was common throughout South Texas and the economy of the region was, for a time, based on it.

Regardless of the economic dependency upon Mexican labor, landowners and farmers saw them as expendable: "We have plenty of Mexicans; if they don't pick enough (cotton), we just get some more." (112) There were no programs for public welfare and if a family didn't work, they starved. There were virtually no alternatives for the Mexican laborer. "As one old (share cropper) described it, 'we were *burros de la tierra.*' He went on to say:

> *I worked for my patron for fifteen years. Then one day the patron told me to leave. He didn't need me any more. You see he bought a tractor, and it could do the work better than me. He was tired, too, of our chickens eating on his grain, and he thought our children should stay home from school and work. We weren't needed anymore, you see. So he got rid of us... We did not want to believe our patrones did not care. We had nothing else. We could not speak English. We had no land and no education. For many of us the patron was our only hope. (113)*

The Mexican laborer was in the middle, unskilled, uneducated, unwanted by his own country and merely used in his adopted one. The effects of these attitudes, combined with the culture known for centuries, created a dominated, oppressed people. Living in isolated communities or neighborhoods, where the Spanish language and Mexican customs prevailed, they resembled the early Anglos in Austin's colony: willing to work and live in another country, but unwilling to become assimilated. They wanted to remain Mexicans in a totally non-Mexican culture. (114)

In the comprehensive study of the Mexican experience in the United States, The Mexican-American People - The Nation's Second Largest Minority, by Grebler, Moore and Guzman, the uniqueness of their immigration in

contrast to that of other groups is emphasized. Immigrants leave a country because of some unfavorable situation; "...if they had unequivocally favorable attitudes toward all aspects of their home country they would presumably still be there." (115) The tenacity of Mexicans in retaining their culture and language and the strong nationalistic spirit toward Mexico, especially in the early immigration period, has set them apart from European immigrants.

The proximity of the homeland is certainly a factor. Settlement in separate communities, as noted earlier, also encourages the retention of the culture. Their concentration in "dead-end agricultural jobs" blocked paths to assimilation: "Industrial work, besides being more steady and better paid, has always provided a more promising avenue to social mobility." (116) Underriding all these factors, and having greater impact, were the attitudes of the Mexican immigrant and the Anglo.

> *Mexicans for the most part considered themselves humiliated and beaten by the defeat suffered at the hands of the North Americans as a result of the Mexican-American war. The yanqui protestants were feared, hated and envied. In turn, the North Americans thought the Mexican to be inferior and seemed to despise them. There would be no reconciliation of the two cultures, it seemed, as each rejected any gesture offered by the other. One people remained humble, the other arrogant, but both remained proud. (117)*

Regardless of embedded animosities, degrees of acculturation and assimilation were inevitable. The lack of close contact slowed but did not prevent the process. An important and often overlooked point is that the South Texas Anglo was also undergoing acculturation. Familiarity with Spanish, knowledge of customs and traditions was common among Anglos, especially

those that employed Mexican laborers. While these may be considered the trappings of a culture, they are still indicators of a certain understanding and acceptance.

The end of the revolution in Mexico did not halt immigration. The new politics emphasized industry, not agriculture, and the peasants were virtually ignored. They kept coming to the United States, legally and otherwise, until well into the 1920s.

Oppostition to immigration began in the early 1920s in a general response to the isolationist attitude prevalent throughout the United States. Although business and industry welcomed aliens - they provided a cheap and available labor pool - immigration laws were strengthened and the Border Patrol was created in 1924. The United States consulates in Mexico "started to apply with unprecedented rigor the literacy test legislated in 1917." (118)

In South Texas, where people thought immigration policy referred to Europeans and Orientals only, the idea of restricting Mexicans was not popular. The enforcement of the literacy test was a major complaint:

> *The illiterate ones are the ones we want. The educated ones are smart. The immigration law lets them in and keeps out the ones we need. They let in the anarchists (agitators) and keep out the illiterates; they're the very class we need to do our labor. (119)*

Keeping the Mexicans uneducated kept them subservient. Keeping children out of school meant there were more laborers in the fields. There was a school for Anglo children in Corpus Christi in 1857; after the Civil War, schools opened for blacks.

Although the public schools were founded in the early seventies, the actual entrance of Mexicans dates from about 1891 when they entered the public schools of Corpus Christi.

Practically coincident with the entry of Mexican (-American) children to the public schools, a separate school was provided for them. In 1896 the enrollment of this school was 110 children. In 1929 it was 1,320. (120)

In 1904, the first Mexican-American graduated from a grammar school in Corpus Christi. By 1929, a group of Mexican-Americans were in high school and in 1927, one made valedictorian. Attending school was more common amongst children living in cities; those in rural areas seldom had the opportunity. If they were enrolled, actual attendance was often irregular:

For illustration, of the 32 Mexican (-American) children on the rolls of the Petronilla school...in January, 1929, 23 had attendance records so badly broken that at least in one month during the year the teacher had entered on the record: 'Didn't attend enough', in lieu of a grade. (121)

The need for the children as laborers in the cotton fields was not the only reason for the lack of attendance. "The Mexican (-Americans)...(were) without ancestral educational background when they in turn had opened to them the possibilities of education." (122) The parents had received no formal education in Mexico and may have harbored some suspicion of schools as Anglo institutions.

A lot of non-attendance is due to the parents. They are uneducated and don't realize what their children are deprived of...The Mexicans (-Americans) are interested in educating their children up to a certain point, but not up to the same point as the (Anglo-) Americans. They won't let school interfere with cotton picking,

but afterwards they send them to school... Their aim in life is to know enough so as not to get cheated. (123)

A Mexican-American businessman stated that the problem centered on the use of an education - "Mexicans (-Americans) were given less chance of good employment than Americans."

They say, what is the use of sending children to school. We send them four or five years and they can't get out of the first or second readers. The trouble may be with the teacher. It may be with the parents? Yes. Also the teachers don't know how to teach the children English, and the children and parents don't take an interest until it is too late, and then the children have to go to work. (124)

There were arguments for and against educating Mexican-American children; most South Texas communities were nearly equally divided on the issue. The irregular and short-term attendance, lack of funds, and the attitude that the children didn't need to be educated to pick cotton fought against enrollment. Compulsory attendance was enforced in Corpus Christi, but had little effect in rural areas due to the confines of the law: (it covered) "children from ages eight to fourteen living within two and one-half miles of the school house by road, unless free transportation is furnished for a greater distance, and requires but 100 days' attendance." (125)

The most prominent reason for non-enforcement...is the attitude of the farmers...(who) do not want the Mexicans to receive much education. (The farmers fear) that if educated they will advance economically and migrate to the cities, or leave without paying their debts, or demand higher wages...(126)

The arguments in favor of education centered on the rights of Mexican-Americans as citizens of the United States: "They are citizens and should be educated. I don't believe in keeping any class down just to have farm labor." (127) The advantages of education were understood by landowners:

> *If the Mexicans would take advantage of education, it would be better... You can do business better if they are educated than if they are not; then they know weights. Some are hard to settle with who are not educated. (128)*

The failure of Mexican-American parents to encourage the childrens' attendance often was due to the need for the children to work. The Mexican culture, generally, did not prize education in and of itself, or as a means of bettering one's situation. It was necessary to learn the very basic skills of writing and reading, but the need to work and make money was considered more important. (129) In addition, the culture did not encourage the kind of progress considered important by Anglo standards. According to Dinnerstein, et al, in Natives and Strangers, this attitude was shared by ethnic groups with a strong Roman Catholic influence:

> *Mexicans, French Canadians, Poles, and Italians cherished views that would scarcely induce their offspring to surpass them in attainment. Children were taught that individual accomplishment had to be subordinated to family needs; that education in itself had little value; and that gainful employment, at the earliest age, was a positive good. Mobility...took one away from one's family and threatened traditions. Also, none of these peoples stressed the advantages of learning English... Among the Mexicans...the culture dictated that an individual refrain from trying to do something he could not master. ...it would be better 'not to try to reach a goal barred by serious obstacles than to pursue a goal at the risk of failure. Not to try does not reflect negatively on their manliness and honor but to try and fail does.' (130)*

These attitudes combined with realities - "early marriage with large families...unsuitable text books...wrong methods...a different home language..." - to inhibit education advancement. (131)

State laws on segregation did not separate Mexican-Americans from Anglos, only blacks; legally, Mexicans were 'white'. In practice, however, there were 'American,' 'Mexican' and 'Negro' facilities throughout South Texas. In some cases, separation involved geographical location; in others, children used different classrooms within the same building. The segregation was most common in the early grades, "...because the great majority of Mexican children were in the first four or five grades..." (132) Most Mexican-American children did not stay in school long enough to advance beyond the grades offered in the segregated school, but some towns, Corpus Christi and Kingsville for example, did have 'Mexican' high schools.

Although most of the reasons given for segregation were the same as those given for not educating Mexican-Americans at all, some educators saw the separation as a means of protecting the Mexican-American child, whom they considered socially inferior.

> *The white child looks on the Mexican (-American) as on the Negro before the war, to be cuffed about and used as an inferior people. If you can segregate a few grades until they learn they are not inferior -- except socially -- then you can put them together... They get an idea they are inferior on the farm. If...segregated in the early grades...they will learn to take their places as whites and citizens. (133)*

There were many white educators who felt that Mexican-American children benefitted from separate facilities and would stay in school longer if

the segregation was extended into high school. While some Mexican-American parents were opposed to separate facilities, other parents and students preferred them. As a high school boy pointed out:

> *Of course I wouldn't like (American) grammar school as well as the Mexican school. We're Mexicans and they're Americans. I like to be with my own people. Yes, I learn more English here, but I wish we had a Mexican high school. Then we could speak Spanish on the playground. (134)*

By 1929, the situation in Nueces County schools was changing. Mexican-American parents were getting involved in the educational process, resisting the separation of facilities and forming Mexican Parent-Teacher Associations. As school was opeining in the fall of 1929, "...an informed person described the situation...":

> *The parents have been telephoning the school authorities ever since they've been letting some Mexicans into the Evans and some other ward schools. The authorities tell them to keep quiet or they'll be coming over in large numbers; the law gives them the right to. They don't advertise when there are openings for Mexican (-American) children...but they let a few know and register... them... American parents didn't want one part-Mexican child admitted to...school, and made an objection to an attorney, but she was admitted, nevertheless. (135)*

The separation of Mexican-Americans extended to housing, also. Subdivisions in Corpus Christi were restricted to "Caucasions" or "white persons" which, legally, did not include Mexican-Americans. There were middle and upper income level Mexican-Americans who lived in 'white only' areas and were accepted mainly because of their language ability - "These all speak

good English" (136) - their higher status and, to some extent, lighter skin color. It was the poor, dark, *pelado*, fresh from Mexico and knowing little English that bore the brunt of discrimination. (137)

It was this group, the Mexican Indians, that had, by their existence, spurred debates in the state legislature over the definition of 'white' as far back as 1845. Voting rights were given to all 'white' men and although Mexicans were considered white as opposed to blacks, most Texans did not include them in the term; there were whites, blacks and Mexicans.

Colonel H.L. Kinney had upheld the right of Mexican-Americans to vote in Corpus Christi, and most South Texas counties followed his lead. The protection of their rights gave the group problems as early as 1892:

> *The besetting sin in the border counties...is the traffic in Mexican votes. They are imported by hundreds, carried to the county clerk and made to declare their intention - of becoming citizens - at the cost of twenty-five cents per head, herded in corrals and voted. Thus the will of the bona fide citizens is set at naught by a horde of ignorant pelados. (138)*

This use of Mexicans made the situation for Mexican-Americans difficult since their citizenship and allegiance were held suspect by Anglos. "About 1915 it was charged that in Corpus Christi poll taxes of Mexicans were paid by Americans, the receipts for which were handed to the Mexicans just as they went to the polls to vote as directed by those who had paid their poll taxes." (139) In 1918, election reform laws were passed limiting suffrage to American citizens and "cleaner elections" were a result. (140) Scandals continued for many years, but their regularity waned.

In Corpus Christi, the Mexican-American voters held the "balance of

power politically," but their votes were manipulated. (141) In 1929, there were 1,254 Mexican-American voters out of 5,956 total in Nueces County, or 21.1 percent. They did tend to vote as a bloc:

> *The Mexican (-Americans) stand together and they stand for a friend. I help them whether they have money or not; they appreciate it more than (Anglo) Americans. They vote in a bloc for the (Anglos) who protect and help them better their condition. I can get 90 per cent of the Mexican (-American) vote without going outside my house.*
>
> *Mexican (-Americans) vote as a unit, as a white man in whom they have confidence does - an intelligent white man. (142)*

In the rural areas, the Mexican-American vote was negligible or, if exercised, controlled by employers and landowners. This was best seen in the election in Hidalgo County where the Ku Klux Klan carried the Mexican-American vote.

The formation of the League of Latin-American Citizens in 1929, from the union of three other South Texas groups, had an influence on the use of Mexican-American political power. The division of 'Mexicans' and 'Americans' was a strong issue, but one ignored during elections: "...a young Mexican (-American) woman of moderate education and light complexion, exclaimed, 'But when they want your vote, you're an *American*.'" (143)

Because of the constant stream of Mexicans crossing the river and settling in South Texas, the question of who were citizens and who were not became more and more common. There were many Americans of Mexican descent who had been born in the United States, yet spoke virtually no English and rarely exercised the rights they held as citizens. The term 'Mexican-

American' was not common in the 1930s; all were simply 'Mexicans.' The League, referred to as LULAC, stressed the American citizenship of its members and promoted the exercise of inherent rights. The organization stated as its first 'aim and purpose': "To develop within the members of our race the best, purest and most perfect type of a true and loyal citizen of the United States of America." (144)

Other purposes which seemed designed to end speculation on the loyalty of Mexican-Americans included:

> *4. The acquisition of the English language, which is the official language of our country, being necessary for the enjoyment of our rights and privileges, we declare it to be the official language of this Organization.*
>
> *5. To define with absolute and unmistakable clearness our unquestionable loyalty to the ideals, principles and citizenship of the United States of America.*
>
> *6. To assume complete responsibility for the education of our children as to their rights and duties and the language and customs of this country; the latter, in so far as they may be good customs. (145)*

In addition, LULAC aimed to promote "the cultural advancement of persons of Mexican ancestry, and the effacement of public school racial distinctions which are adverse to Mexicans." (146)

> *3. To use all the legal means at our command to the end that all citizens...may enjoy equal rights, the equal protection of the laws...and equal opportunities and privileges.*
>
> *7. We solemnly declare once for all to maintain a sincere and respectful reverence for our racial origin of which we are proud.*
>
> *13. With our vote and influence we shall endeavor to place in*

public office men who show by their deeds, respect and consideration for our people.

20. We shall encourage the creation of educational institutions for Latin-Americans and we shall lend our support to these already in existence. (147)

It was during these years that the Mexican-American was born. Although a high school boy from Corpus Christi stated in 1929, "I know I'm not an American; I'm a Mexican," (148) LULAC and similar groups were helping to dispel that idea from outsiders as well as Mexican-Americans themselves.

As a result of increasingly restrictive immigration laws, the numbers of immigrants from Mexico began to decline in 1928. There was also a resurgence of Ku Klux Klan activities in the 1920s that was noticeable in South Texas. By the time of the Great Depression, immigration from Mexico had fallen off considerably.

Only 32,700 Mexicans entered the United States on permanent visas during the 1930s, down to 4 percent of total U.S. immigration. In fact, hard times in the 1930s reversed the previous trend entirely, and more Mexicans (some 500,000) left the United States than entered. (149)

Perhaps it was the economic hardships suffered during the Depression that allowed certain antagonistic feelings to surface. Before, Mexican laborers had been welcomed to agricultural jobs, but they were suddenly seen as "surplus labor...a drain on public relief funds." (150) Whatever the cause, about 500,000 people were 'repatriated' to Mexico where the government had cooperated with the United States in order to get some workers to

return. Although there were many illegal entrants who were returned under the program, "naturalized and United States-born husbands, wives and children...had to choose between moving to Mexico or breaking up their families." (151) Many who were not 'encouraged' to return to Mexico by governments, elected to do so from lack of employment. In general, the ones who stayed were those with some economic security, those who had something to lose by leaving.

The Depression ended with World War II and the wartime industries required labor; immigration increased again, and the Mexicans were welcomed back. Adding to the immigration was the *Bracero* program instituted in 1942. This United States-Mexico agreement "provided for Mexican laborers to enter the United States as short-term contract workers, primarily in agriculture and transportation." (152) From 1942 to 1947, 200,000 *braceros* entered twenty-one states. The program ended but was resurrected by Congress in 1951 to meet the needs created by the Korean War. This phase lasted until 1964, and peaked in 1959, "when nearly 450,000 *braceros* entered the United States. In 1960 they formed 26 per cent of the nation's seasonal agricultural labor force." (153) In the years of its enactment, 1942 to 1964, nearly five million Mexicans were involved in the program. (154)

Throughout the country's history, the United States policy on immigration had been a victim of changing attitudes, economic trends and periodic fears of 'agitators,' 'revolutionaries' and 'reds'; not until the 1960s, was the basis of a fair and standard policy established. The 'Red Scare' of the 1950s had attempted to establish tight security precautions and restrictions under the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act which was vetoed by

President Truman. In less than ten years, the "national origin quotas system" was abolished by President Kennedy's more liberal legislation that evolved into the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments. This bill, signed into law by President Johnson in 1965, "established annual limits of 120,000 immigrants from the Western Hemisphere...in 1976 Congress added a 20,000-person ceiling on immigration from any one country in the Western Hemisphere..." (155) The new act established preferences for people skilled in particular trades and abilities; country of origin was no longer a handicap or advantage.

In spite of the increase in the number of immigrants from Mexico and South America, the need for laborers was still great. Illegal aliens - wetbacks or *mojados* - continued to cross in high numbers. When these workers found jobs, they often were paid less than other laborers, yet were unable to protest out of fear of detection and deportation. Many employers used the fear to their own advantage.

The situation with Mexicans and Mexican-Americans became increasingly more complicated with Operation Wetback in 1950-1955. In those years, the United States government rounded up and expelled 3.8 million illegal workers, "though many of those may have been expelled more than once." (156) In their pursuit of illegal aliens, government agents often picked up Mexican-Americans who were required to prove their citizenship; 'guilty until proven innocent.' This created tensions not only between the Anglos and Mexican-Americans, but between Mexicans and Mexican-Americans and within the Mexican-American community as well.

Some Chicanos, including many labor leaders have favored severe restrictions on undocumented workers on the grounds that they take jobs from Mexican Americans... Others react strongly against the Immigration Service, challenging infrigements of civil rights as well as the physical violence sometimes used in search-and-seizure operations. (157)

The constant flow of immigrants from Mexico provided reinforcement of the linguistic and cultural ties. The newcomers gravitated to the Mexican-American communities and found a familiar environment, not a foreign country. It often was possible for recent arrivals to work without having to learn English and there was little need to join the mainstream society. Since many of the immigrants were unskilled and uneducated, job opportunities were limited and delivered little socioeconomic progress. Still their life in the United States was better than what they had known in Mexico and they continued to come.

Because of the proximity of the border, many Mexicans considered their stay in the United States temporary; they would return to visit often and planned to move back when financially secure. One Corpus Christi woman interviewed remarked that not until she was entering high school did her parents make a conscious decision to remain in the United States. It was this decision, she felt, that made her concentrate her attention on succeeding here. Before, she had thought that what she did or didn't do mattered little since there had always been talk of returning to Mexico.

Gradually, an independent Mexican-American culture began to emerge, a culture that took from the Anglo society the values and concepts that could mesh with those brought from Mexico. In time, the culture became distinct: not really Mexican; not completely Anglo. One of the areas of strongest

cultural tenacity was in language. In the Grebler book, stages in the shift from the mother tongue to the new language are identified:

> *In the first stage of acculturation in the United States, English is only used in a few spheres, such as work, where the mother tongue cannot be used; in the second stage, immigrants not only use English in an increasing number of spheres, but it begins to creep into their casual conversation; in the third stage there is a maximum overlap between languages and spheres of life; and in the final stage, English has almost entirely displaced the mother tongue. (158)*

The stages tend to disappear as the isolation of Mexicans decreases and are certainly less apparent in large cities. In South Texas, however, the pattern generally holds. (159)

> *In a single afternoon on the West Side (of San Antonio) one can use English; proper Spanish, with its stilted forms, to the elderly; middle-generation Spanish, laced with anglicisms, to businessmen; and the pachuco patois of the street, with its secret slang words and double meanings. (160)*

In recent years, the issue of bilingual education has made many people examine the reasons why Spanish has persisted in use while other languages, such as Czech and German, have virtually disappeared. The high number of Spanish-speaking immigrants locally and their concentration in specific areas certainly play parts in the persistence of the language but the usefulness of Spanish is probably the main cause of its continuity. Most South Texans, Anglos included, know Spanish to some degree. It is still not necessary for a Mexican or Mexican-American to know English in order to work or care for a family; one can survive without it.

Conversely, the drive to succeed, to advance, has put pressure on Mexican-Americans to learn English. Many realize that they cannot get ahead without being able to converse in English, especially in the cities. This does not necessitate an abandonment of Spanish - it is still used in the home and with friends - but the acceptance of English as a second language. While this may coincide with the second stage noted above, it may also indicate a trait of second or third generation Mexican-Americans rather than one of a recent arrival.

The existence of far-reaching broadcasts in Spanish on radio and television has also been a strong factor in the continuity of the language. The Grebler book notes that radio is especially important in the retention of Spanish because it is popular among Mexican-Americans regardless of income and social class. (161) Spanish language television programs, however, tend to be "the favorite only among poorer families in predominantly Mexican areas." (162) Other Spanish media are not as influential. Respondents to Grebler's survey had no preference or subscribed to no newspapers. This, according to the authors, may be due to the literate tradition:

> *In Mexico, literacy drives were instituted after the invention and wide use of radio, and radio communication in that country - and in this country for the Mexican immigrant - has burgeoned probably at the expense of newspaper reading. (163)*

All groups have tried to maintain their language but, for a number of reasons, the Mexican-Americans have been the most successful. The endurance of the native language after immigration is a characteristic unique to Mexicans when they are compared to other ethnic groups. The reasons cited are

certainly important to the retention, but the fact that many Mexicans are recent immigrants is a point often overlooked. Most ethnic groups arrived within a specific period; for example, the immigration of Czechoslovakians was related to the revolution of 1896 and most of them arrived within a fifteen year span. When conditions in the homeland improved in the early 1900s, immigration slowed considerably. The ones who were here stayed, learned English and acculturated. The absorption of Czechs into mainstream American life was relatively complete since there were no more great waves of immigration from that country. The Mexicans, on the other hand, have always come. Although there have been discernible waves, particularly during revolutions, there has been a steady stream even in times of stability. Within the group, there are Mexican nationals who arrived from Mexico last week and Mexican-Americans who have lived in South Texas for generations. When viewed only by their ethnicity, the varying degrees of experience and acculturation are not realized. As one interviewee pointed out, "There is no more one Mexican-American community here (in Nueces County) than there is one Anglo community. We are as diversified as anyone else." (164)

Some historians believe that their involvement in World War II led Mexican-Americans to challenge the discrimination they had previously been forced to suffer: "...the World War II era proved to be generally positive for Mexican-Americans and is often viewed as a watershed in their history." (165) For many Mexican-Americans, their service in the armed forces provided them the opportunity to meet unbiased Anglos for the first time. Many realized to what extent their rights as citizens had been abused and when the war ended, political activism began.

The G.I. Bill of Rights, which provided such benefits as subsidies for education, and loans for housing and business, gave many the means for advancement. LULAC, considered an "assimilationist" group (166), grew in influence and numerous service organizations emerged.

Because Mexican-American veterans were being refused membership in veterans' organizations, the American G.I. Forum was founded in Corpus Christi in 1948 to provide services to veterans and their families. Within a year of its creation, the Forum had received national attention in its fight for the rights of Felix Longoria.

In June, 1945, Felix Longoria from Three Rivers was killed in Luzon, The Philippines. When the war ended, his family requested that his body be returned to his hometown for burial. Because he was Mexican-American, officials refused to allow his burial in the military cemetery. His family sought the assistance of the American G.I. Forum in Corpus Christi. The Forum contacted Lyndon B. Johnson, then a Senator in Washington, D.C. Through the combined efforts of the Forum, Johnson and citizens in Three Rivers and Corpus Christi, Felix Longoria was buried in Arlington National Cemetery, February 16, 1949. The incident brought attention to the discrimination Mexican-Americans faced, not only in South Texas but throughout the country, and provided impetus in the push for civil rights.

The Mexican-American population continued to increase in the 1950s, due to a growth in immigration and the high birthrate. (167) Political representation suffered, however, partly because many Mexican-Americans did not obtain United States citizenship although they had lived in this country for years. Those who had entered illegally feared deportation even

though they were eligible for naturalization. Others believed they would eventually return to Mexico and some, while having no interest in returning, still refused to give up their Mexican citizenship.

> *In comparison to immigrants from other countries, Mexicans have been more reluctant to become naturalized citizens. From 1959 to 1966, only 2.4 to 5.0 percent annually of those eligible became U.S. citizens, in contrast to 25 to 33 percent of other immigrants with comparable lengths of residence. (168)*

The electoral power of Mexican-Americans has been weakened by a relatively low voter registration and citizenship status. The attachment to Mexico causes some Anglos to retain suspicions about Mexican-American loyalties, even though most Mexican-Americans have repeatedly shown their allegiance to the United States. The fact that Mexican-Americans have managed to retain much of the homeland culture when other groups have assimilated is considered by some to be 'un-American.' One interviewee attributed the suspicion to jealousy: "Other groups have lost their language and customs. They don't want to see us succeed where they have failed." (169) Another pointed out that Americans rarely assimilate when they move abroad but live in "colonies" and "remain apart from the country's life." (170)

The defensive postures - on all sides - further alienate the groups and exacerbate the conflicts that often are the result of tradition rather than actual experience.

In interviews with Mexican-Americans, two issues were apparent: most reported that they personally had experienced little discrimination; and there were decidely different opinions on the subject of cultural retention,

whether in terms of language or customs. The following excerpts emphasize these issues.

On Discrimination

T. Arbarca: I can remember a time here in Corpus Christi - I was born and raised here - when they had signs 'No Mexicans Allowed.' Of course, we didn't protest then, because we would land up in jail and get our heads busted! All that has changed. For the better, of course.

...there has to be a desire between the two groups to get along together. And many Anglos still feel that the Anglo is superior to the Mexican-American, and to blacks. There are many Mexican-Americans who do not like Anglos and don't want to have anything to do with them. There is a sort of tolerance. Now the Anglos tolerate the Mexican-American because they have to work with them, and sell them things; they need them. And likewise the Mexican-Americans (need the Anglos). Economics...that is the name of the game. But I personally have never had any problems.

When my mother-in-law is talking about way back yonder, and whenever the old women would get together - they would usually get together at somebody's wedding or funeral. Or maybe a baptism. Because the Mexican people then, and often now, make a big celebration of a baptizing. They call each other comadre, which is a relationship: Godparents. It is a relationship stronger than a friendship and not as strong as kinship; marriage and blood. And they will be sitting around and will say (In Spanish) 'You know Maria Guerra, from down the street. Well, she married a Gringo.' They use the word 'Gringo' as we use 'Anglo.' Not derrogatorily, you understand. And then they say, 'Que Tiene?' In other words, 'What's wrong with him?' Because years ago (whenever an Anglo married a Mexican), he had a foot off, or he had an arm off, or he had only one eye. ...He wasn't acceptable by his own people, so he would marry a Mexican girl.

M. Sanchez: We were segregated. In those years (early 1930s) we just didn't think, we just didn't know when anything was wrong. Those years when we were going to school we were

there. I used to go over for the weekend and spend the weekend with my mother and daddy. In Sinton-Taft, they didn't like the Mexicans; they separated the Mexicans from the Americans in their neighborhood. So the company gave my daddy a home to live in and he was on the American side and that burned up the Mexicans. Because they gave us a privilege of living on the American side. But it quieted down. Over there a Mexican was not allowed to step in the bank or go into the drug store or to go here or there where Anglos were served. I myself did it on purpose and I was not even in the LULAC then - I was just a young girl, I was nothing but fourteen, I guess. I went in the bank, I had made a friend with the bank president which was Mr. Tot. I went in the drug store, I went in the grocery store, which belonged to the Cage's... We used to go to this little church, the Catholic church. Our church had a Mass every week. Over at the Anglo side they had a church. Their Mass was every Sunday and we used to go over to the Anglo church. I would never say I was thrown out or my family or my sister was ever thrown out of a place, or were not wanted. It never happened to us. It happened to other people.

E. Garcia: I feel that Mexican-Americans harm themselves more than whites (harm them); they're victims of themselves more than white society. There are prejudices, I know that; I'm not blind to it, but I'd rather look at it this way. As a woman, I've found I'm discriminated against, but it's as a woman, not Mexican-American. An individual is responsible for the impression they make on another individual. You'll be recognized for what you are, that's what I've experienced.

I'm not in agreement that we should be emphasizing our differences, I think we should be looking at our similarities. My daughter has less problems about that - I'm still prejudiced against black people, but she doesn't feel that at all. I've been raised thinking white people are prettier, blue eyes are prettier, blond hair, long, straight noses are prettier. That's my mother's influence. I think whites are prettier than Mexican-Americans and blacks, physically prettier. My mother always said, 'The darker you are, the uglier you are.' And my daughter tans, can you imagine? She is not prejudiced - thank God - that's something she doesn't have to cope with. She dates a black man and I have come to accept him as an individual, but I still have trouble.

Maybe she's teaching me to be less prejudiced.

J. Mireles: (Recalling her childhood near Rio Grande City) We never had to suffer any discrimination because in that part of Texas it was the Mexican-American who ruled the land. I didn't know what discrimination was until we moved to Alice. We lived next door to an American family there and there were two little girls about our age and one day after school, they were out there and we were out there, and I said, 'I want to play.' And one of the girls said, 'You can't play with us because you are a Mexican.' That was the first time I knew that there was anything like discrimination because we didn't find it, certainly not in Rio Grande City. When we went there, we played with all the little (Anglo) girls from the army post and who were the children of my wealthy uncle, so nobody ever told me we were different.

The ranch people, the (Anglo) American ranch people, you see we became good friends and there was no discrimination. I didn't meet it. They say that there is and that there was, but I didn't meet it, I never did. In San Antonio did I ever meet discrimination of any sort? No. When I came here (to Corpus Christi), I did meet it. I wasn't used to it, but I had this in my favor: you see, I had taught at St. Mary's Hall (a private, Episcopalian school for girls in San Antonio). I had done all of my teaching there. Most of the teachers were eastern women. The headmistress was a very intelligent and highly educated woman, Miss Ruth Coit.

I grew up with two types of people in San Antonio...the Catholic and...the Episcopalian. The Episcopalian bishop, the Catholic bishop, were my friends, so when I came here, I had letters of recommendation from Bishop Munds and Miss Ruth Coit and from the wealthy people. My friends in San Antonio wrote their friends here. I was to phone them and tell them who I was and they knew that I was coming so my first friends here were among the High Episcopalians. The Latin people of Mexico wouldn't have anything to do with me because they said I was *Americanisada* - Americanized - that I didn't want to have anything to do with them. But they didn't call on me, they didn't come to see me, and I couldn't go and knock on their doors and say I'm so and so. But the Americans, the Episcopalians, called on me, gave a tea to introduce me, so naturally they were my first friends. But I had many a fight. Now instead of squabbling to

get in with the American group which I have never done because of my backing and my background, my family and my San Antonio friends, we didn't have to do that. Ed (husband) was the same; we didn't have any problems. I guess we had good recommendations from the university and San Antonio; we just fitted in.

On Culture and Education

T. Arbarca: (The early Mexican settlers) brought with them, of course, their religions, their customs, their traditions, their superstitions. (They) have colored the culture of the present-day Mexican-American. The people who came here back in that time were hardy pioneer stock. I don't think that any of the immigrants that you find in any part of the United States way back yonder started out with Ph.D. or Masters degrees. They were people who worked and lived by the sweat of their brow. They were farmers, tradesmen and craftsmen of different types. Consequently, the language they brought over here was not the language that was spoken in the high professions or social circles in Mexico where they came from. That is why we have a type of Spanish here which we have inherited from those people, which is commonly known as Tex-Mex.

My father was a Spaniard. He immigrated to the United States way back yonder and he married my mother, who was an English teacher. I happened to be fortunate that, linguistically, I inherited the best of both cultures. And my father insisted that I learn Spanish well, and do it right. My mother insisted that I do likewise with English. Consequently, I grew up not being allowed to use slang expressions in my home, like 'ain't' or 'naw,' or 'yeh.' I had to say 'Yes, Ma'am' and 'Yes, Sir' and 'No, Sir' and 'isn't' and 'are not,' etc. As things went on, the Mexican-American in the state of Texas - in South Texas - as a group and individually have been learning English. The many words that have crept in the everyday vocabulary of the average Mexican-American in the ethnic group here...like today you find a lot of youngsters...the word for 'signing,' placing your signature on paper, is '*firmar*.' And instead of saying '*Yo voy a firmar*' (I am going to sign), they say '*Yo voy a sinar*.' 'Parking' - they use the word '*parquenar*' instead of *estacionar*.'

There has also been through the years a great awareness

among the Mexican-Americans of the need for English - for their children to learn English - and you find many households where the children speak only English. They learn Spanish, and some know a little Spanish to be able to converse with grandparents who are, perhaps, not very fluent in English. That happened in my family. ...I wanted my son, primarily, to learn English very well, because there is a certain inferiority complex that goes with not being able to communicate. Not to be able to understand and be understood, etc. I did not want my son to have to go through that, so I wanted him to learn English. And he learned some Spanish but he is not fluent in it. And he speaks Spanish whenever he has to, and makes himself understood. It is not done by choice. He went to kindergarten where he spoke English. My wife is Mexican-American like I am, and I believe that in about ninety percent of the time we speak in English. We speak in Spanish some, but we always speak English to him.

The people back (in the old days) had a lot of superstitions. Some of the language has been lost. As an example, not many people know what you are talking about when you refer to harness on a horse. You don't see too many horses now, you know, and this terminology has been lost. Lot of kids have never seen and don't know what a buggy whip is. Things change. Like here in the United States, many kids have never seen a circus parade. The circus used to come to town, and it was great entertainment for the kids to go down and watch the elephants unload the wagons off the boxcars.

I think, basically the concepts of the people in those old days are still true today - in religion and so forth. But back then, there was a greater amount of respect for the elders by the youngsters. There was a lot of respect for the clergy and the people in the church. There was a lot of respect for law, which doesn't exist today. Well, there is a lot of respect, but, still, there is a lot of lack.

I personally have had a very good relationship with Anglos myself. I have a lot of friends who are Anglos. One thing that helped me very much is the fact that I speak English well. Another thing - I read. Whenever my friends start discussing an article (in a magazine) I know what they are talking about because I have read it myself. Not many people do that in the Mexican-American community. That and the language. A Mexican-American must learn English when he is small to be able to speak

it without an accent. He can't get rid of the accent after he is grown. He can, but it takes a lot of real doing.

Some people in the Mexican-American community have never forgotten the Alamo.

M. Sanchez: We were not supposed to speak Spanish in school. We had to speak English and if the teachers found out we were speaking among each other in Spanish, we got punished for that. We had to learn English. When I went to school, I didn't know a word in English, but we learned it in school. Now days, I see a difference. They're trying to teach our children the bi-lingual language, which I think is beautiful because most of our children right now don't know Spanish, they know nothing but English. I really think...this is my opinion, that it's embarrassing that, if your last name is Garcia, why should you speak nothing but English? You shouldn't be embarrassed about speaking your own language, your own heritage. I'm very proud to be a Mexican. I always will be and I was...

E. Garcia: My family has been here at least a couple of generations. I don't know when we came over from Mexico, probably my grandfather, but I don't know where in Mexico he was born, which is not important to me. We have been here long enough to not have any association with Mexico, so I have always felt that I am an American. I have also felt that I am a Mexican-American because my daddy was very prejudiced against whites, only in the sense that he felt exploited. He never said anything specific, only that they were the ones in power and control and Mexican-Americans had nothing. There was bitterness there, but over the years as he did his work well and advanced, he came to be associated with more whites and now he has a different view: There are some good ones after all!

It just so happened - it was not the regular thing my parents did - but the year before I started school, we drove up to the north, to Wisconsin and those areas, and worked. My daddy and mother worked, either in the fields or in places that pack corn and stuff like that; picked cherries. That's the only thing I got to participate in - picking cherries. I was about five, almost

six - it was during the summer. We drove back in October or November so I started school late my first year and when I came in, they didn't know where to place me, so they put me in Group C. None of the other kids knew English either. The first grade teacher was a Spanish lady - I say Spanish because her skin was real white. And she spoke both English and Spanish. After a couple of weeks, I don't know how long, I was advanced to the B group - at least that's what I thought. There was the high group, the B group, the C group, the D group and the flunkies. I felt pride in that. I don't remember much else about my first year. That woman was bi-lingual and did not make things intolerable for us, but the only impression she made was that she smelled so good, and seemed like such a fine lady. The second grade teacher I remember a lot more. She was also Spanish, younger, more aggressive, more movement, encouragement. She also seemed to place recognition on me, more than the first grade teacher. Like, she decided I was going to be the Queen of May and it was some kind of recognition that I felt pride in. She placed me in the highest group, so I felt I needed to not disappoint her. So I excelled there fairly well. Then I was learning how to read and I felt pride in being able to read one whole page without hesitating. But then, as the book advanced, I didn't feel I was advancing at the same rate I wanted to, as fast as I wanted to. I did okay in second grade, but then when it was time to go to third, my mother moved to another school district. There the teacher was Mexican-American also, with a lot of Indian blood, very dark, and rough. She sort of intimidated me and I hadn't felt that before. I was doing poorly, very poor. Fourth grade, I had a male teacher... Again, he favored only certain students and I wasn't one of the favored ones. I didn't do that well. Fifth grade: we had so many teachers coming in and out - there was turmoil at the time. They were trying to change the curriculum or something, or the way of teaching, so they were going, like, half a class with one teacher, and half with another. The teacher that made the biggest impression on me was the sixth grade. He told us stories about how he had served in the army, so he could go to college and, 'Whatever you want to do is possible. You can borrow money and pay it back afterward - if you want to go to school, you can go to school.' So, he encouraged a lot. He, too, was Mexican-American - all my teachers were through sixth grade. I always felt he contributed a lot to what came after. Not right there, but later I thought...it registered in my mind. Seventh grade was the first time we were integrated with white - the other side of the

tracks - and I was already hostile to it. On registration day, I had a fight with one of the guys and then, I thought, 'It's just too much of a hassle, being hostile.' So I just relaxed. With me, its an on/off deal. If someone provokes me to be hostile, I will be, but it's a thing I'm not proud of. There is a fight in me somewhere, but when I think logically, 'Who are the people I want to work for? Who do I admire?' And it's the good people, the happy people. So in my own mind, I know that's the kind of person I want to be. But it's a constant battle. In junior high I did well in some classes, but some teachers simply didn't motivate me. English was one area. I also felt my English teachers were very motivating; they expected the best.

If there were (rules about speaking only English) they were very lax. In the first and second grades, we were to speak English so we could learn the language. There were rumors, gossip, that if you spoke Spanish you would be reprimanded. There was a little bit of talk that we were being made ashamed of our language, but I think this is all a bunch of hogwash. I don't go with the bilingual education because I feel, I learned Spanish first - that was my handicap. I had the accent before I could learn the English words, form the English sounds. I already had my mouth and tongue trained a different way. That's why (daughter) Melissa only speaks English. She can understand Spanish, but she only speaks English. When I was raising her, I thought, 'She's not going to go through the humiliation of not being able to pronounce the 'O' and the 'A' and all the other word sounds in English.' She picked up some of my accent, but it's not as heavy as mine and she doesn't have the problems I had. I have overcome a lot of them - its been hard work. It's all fine and beautiful to say, 'Learn two languages.' But most of us are human beings with a lot of limitations; lazy. I think, learn the language you're going to have to use for your livlihood, for your well-being, your advancement. There's so much to learn, how can you handle it all in two languages? I don't want to criticize the bi-lingual; Mexican-Americans have made a lot of advances in the past years, but it's been so slow. I wish all teachers today were like my sixth grade teacher who encouraged us to go to college, to learn.

J. Mireles: (Referring to cultural traditions) I went in and the first thing I saw was a screech owl and among the country people, the screech owl was the messenger of the

witches. I gave a loud scream; they all came running to see what had happened. I said, 'Oh! The owl! The owl! The witches!' Then I gave one more yell, then they said, 'Oh, no.' It wasn't a real bird. It was stuffed, and they showed me, but I wouldn't touch it. Well, that day was a day of revelation to me, and because of that, we moved to San Antonio. That night there was to be a play. It was one of Shakespeare's plays translated into Spanish, The Moor of Venice. (Othello) When we came in, there was this black man with a dagger in his hand chasing a very pretty little girl all around the stage. I gave a loud yell, a loud scream, 'Take that black man away from there; don't let him kill the little girl!' Well, Grandfather was embarrassed. So was everybody, so they took me home. That was the beginning and the end of my theater going. Well, I stayed up playing with the other children, until they came from the play, and then they served refreshments and slices of cake, with little dishes of what I thought was custard. I took a big spoon full of it and spit it out. 'It's cold, this custard is cold!' It was ice cream; I hadn't eaten it before. When I got back home, my aunt told mother all about me and the way I had acted, and how embarrassed they had been. And my father says, 'We are leaving the ranch. I don't want my children to be brought up to be the laughing stock of other people. We are going to San Antonio.' And my grandfather says, 'But, Son, San Antonio is too big a town for these little girls. They won't know what's what.' He says, 'Why don't you move to a nearby town? A town that's not so large,' and he mentioned Alice. My father, besides being a teacher, was a bookkeeper, so he said, 'I have a friend there who has a big department store and he wrote me asking me if I knew a bookkeeper who could be trusted. Why don't you go and see what you think of the town? That's a small town and the children will learn to get along with other people in a small town. By the time you are ready for San Antonio, they'll be ready too.' So that's what we did. We moved to Alice and I went to public school. Of course I had been taught in Spanish and English; I had had lessons in English as a foreign language. According to what I had covered in Spanish, I was up in the fifth grade. And the teacher thought maybe by hearing, I would get enough of it to keep on going, but no, it was too difficult. I had to be put in the second grade. I was in the second grade about...well, long enough for me to learn how to say a few things. Then I was put in another grade. By the time school closed, I was up in the fifth grade because I could learn fast. I had a good memory, but it was just the pronunciation that got me. I

remember at the close of school we had a program with all the teachers participating. And this was my contribution in the English that I pronounced then - and I know it is the same English because I have never forgotten it. Again and again, I say it in the same way so I could remember. That's the way everybody pronounced English: 'In the night time, at the right time...' 'The habit of the she rabbit is to dance in the woods,' and that was my contribution. My first English - what I call English - contribution.

Mother was very lonely and homesick for her boy so the whole family moved to San Antonio. There I was with my English, 'In the night time at the right time,' Well, anyway... One thing that my father said, 'These children have to learn English. They will never learn it if they're going to hear Spanish.' So we moved to an American part of town; we were the only Mexicans there. My sister Hortense and I were put in the same grade because we knew little English, one knew as little as the other. But by the end of the school year, we could rattle it off. We learned it very fast and the following year I was in the fifth grade. From there on, you see it was very easy.

(referring to her father) Now if he hadn't been so insistent that we learn English. We could have learned German, because all the people around us were German, but he never wanted us to learn anything but English. He understood everything he heard. He would answer by writing, but he never did talk (English). We asked him and he says, 'Well, when I was very young and we first went to Texas, I made a vow to myself that I would never speak the language that deprived Mexico of so much land.' And he never did.

Y. Lopez: (Referring to language) Well, you go to school and learn it. You take interest. And then the community you are in means a whole lot. You take a great loss in this country. Our young generation, years ago - not now as bad as it used to be - they had so many grandmothers and relatives from Mexico, they wouldn't talk English, only Spanish. You try to teach your children English while they are little and the old ones say, 'Why don't you teach her Spanish?' We had lots of trouble. Today they are finding out the kids can't talk English fluently. In the old days there was hardly any, especially where we were reared up. And 'round here was the same thing.

When we came here back in 1919, I think we must have been the only ones that could speak English because we got the jobs and the others didn't. They couldn't talk English, just Spanish, because grandmothers and great-grandparents couldn't speak English. My father couldn't talk English; Mother very little. Things like that. In this part of the country around here they just didn't have much use for the English language. But they got away and they found out they could learn to speak - just a few words anyway.

On Anglos

E. Garcia: My mother has been quite isolated from everyone except the family she works for - she has been with the same family for thirty-five years, ever since I can remember. What she brought home from her work experience was that they (Anglos) educate themselves, they don't allow themselves to get fat, ...what she saw were the good things about the whites. So I was brought up with both viewpoints. I didn't graduate from high school because I was lonely, isolated from my peers. I was dating one person who was from a different class than I was; he was better off. He came from a family where, if he wanted to go to school, he could go to college. I just wanted to get away from where I was, so I knew this was going to be my way out. I married at the age of sixteen. My mother had instilled in me that you don't have children - children ruin your figure - and the more children you have the poorer you'll always be. Whites have one or two kids - so don't have any kids at all as far as she was concerned. So that was my goal - no kids for me.

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[144]Ibid., p. 243.

[145]Ibid., p. 243.

[146]Ibid., p. 242-3

[147]Ibid., p. 243-4.

[148]Ibid., p. 245.

[149]Thernstrom, Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups, p. 703.

[150]Ibid., p. 703.

[151]Ibid., p. 703.

[152]Ibid., p. 703.

[153]Ibid., p. 703.

[154]Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, Semi-Annual Report to Congress, March 1980, p. 23.

[155]Thernstrom, Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups, p. 703.

[156]Ibid., p. 703.

[157]Ibid., p. 704.

[158]Grebler, et al., The Mexican-American People, The Nation's Second-Largest Minority, p. 426.

[159]Ibid., p. 426.

[160]Richard West, "An American Family." Texas Monthly, March, 1980, pp. 108-181.

[161]Grebler, et al., The Mexican-American People, The Nation's Second-Largest Minority, p. 431.

[162]Ibid., p. 429.

[163]Ibid., p. 432.

[164]Anonymous

[165]Thernstrom, Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups, p. 712.

[166]Ibid., p. 712.

[167]Ibid., p. 712.

[168]Ibid., p. 714.

[169]Anonymous

[170]Ibid.

Polish: There are Polish place names throughout the United States -- Sandusky, Warsaw, Pulaski -- but few Polish words in the everday English vocabulary. Polish contributions, however, are many. Bagels, chewy rolls with a hole in the center, are Polish; the first bagel bakery in America was started by a Jewish Pole. Other foods are kielbasa (sausage), potato knishes and Coney Island hot dogs. Polish scientists developed the vitamin and designed the LEM for driving on the moon. Poles also introduced the practice of painting toe nails to American women.

In Poland, if thirteen people are seated at the same dinner table it is bad luck and one will die before the year is out. Also bad luck are crows, pidgeons and wolves, but goats are lucky.

History is full of famous Poles, beginning with Copericus and on to Mme. Curie. The first governor of Alaska was Wlodzimierz Krzyzanowski, a Brigadier General who served in the Civil War. Some Polish names are difficult for some people to pronounce and name-changing is not uncommon within the group. Edmund Muskie's father simplified Marciszewski when he emigrated; Michael Goldwasser arrived in 1848 and changed his name to Goldwater. His grandson Barry made the name well-known. The Goldwyn of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer films was Goldfish before he left Warsaw; Michael Landon was Michael Orowicz; and Stephanie Powers changed her surname of Federkiewicz. While ethnic names are a source of pride to some, others who depend upon name recognition for success, such as stars and politicians, often feel compelled to simplify things. One current actress that didn't change her name, in spite of persistent agents is Loretta Swit. In Polish, her name is pronounced 'sweet' and means dawn.

from The Ethnic Almanac

Poland, like its neighbor Czechoslovakia, has a long history of being conquered and forced into submission by foreign invaders. Poles are made up of Kashubes from Pomerania, Gorali from Malopolska, Mazurians from an area once known as East Prussia, Galicians and Silesians. (1)

As early as 966, Poles converted to Catholicism and formed a political unit. By 1569, the kingdom of Poland had combined with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to create a powerful monarchy. (2)

The feudal agrarian base gradually was outmoded and internal conflicts eroded unity; within two centuries, Poland was partitioned by Prussia, Austria and Russia. Until World War I, the country remained divided and absorbed into these empires. (3)

There were Polish immigrants in the Jamestown, Virginia settlement in 1608 and many who fought in the American Revolution, but the major wave of Poles did not come to America until 1860. In the early years, America attracted Polish adventurers, aristocrats and intellectuals seeking freedom. In the late 19th century, however, the group that came were called *za-chlebem* in Poland: emigrants for bread. (4) They were poor and emigration for them was a matter of survival.

The seemingly continuous revolutions, the Napoleonic War and insurrection against Russia had served to devastate much of Eastern Europe. Agrarian reforms had freed the peasants from their obligations to the landlords, but presented them with the problems of land ownership: taxes. Since the

peasants had been freed of feudal dependency, many chose to emigrate because, economically, their circumstances were worse than before emancipation. (5)

Natural disasters plagued Poland in the early 1850s. Typhus and cholera epidemics broke out in 1852 and 1855; floods in 1854 drowned crops and destroyed villages. Food shortages resulting from the flood were cited in Polish newspapers as one of the reasons for the large emigration, especially from Silesia. (6)

> *(In 1855) the Oleszno Landrat, reviewing the reasons for emigration, mentioned an increase in the number of people without property, the bad harvests one after another, the growth of various financial obligations and, in conclusion, the answer one gets when one tries to stop people from going overseas: 'It's all the same whether we perish here or there (i.e., America), but in any case we want to try for better or worse.'* (7)

Most of the Polish immigrants to Texas came from Upper Silesia, a region historically shared with Czechoslovakia. In the 1840s, there had been a few Polish Silesians in a group of Czechs emigrating to Texas and the letters they wrote home probably had a strong affect on the decisions of others. While many of the claims were outrageous -- a Frenchman was supposedly taking people from Bremen to Galveston for free (8) -- some reports were accurate. A Catholic priest wrote from Texas, "I prefer it here: uncomfortable but free." (9)

Poland was a predominantly Catholic country. Rev. Leopold Moczygemba had traveled from Upper Silesia to New Braunfels, Texas, in 1851 as a missionary to the German community. The Franciscan wrote letters home urging his fellow Poles to come, and in 1854, the first large group of Polish

immigrants to Texas arrived in Galveston. (10) Included in the 150 were Moczygemba's father and brother. (11)

Unfortunately for the Poles, conditions were not the best: a yellow fever outbreak raged along the coast and many of the immigrants suffered greatly on the trip to their settlement along the San Antonio River. It has been claimed that, when the group finally saw the desolate area that was to be their new home, they wanted to hang Father Moczygemba, but could not find a tree. (12)

The group managed to endure the winter, although a few families turned back to the established towns of Victoria and Yorktown which they had passed through on their trip from the coast.

Within the year, another Silesian group of seven hundred landed at Galveston. As a youngster, L. B. Russell watched the immigrants as they traveled past his home on their way inland.

> *The arrival of the colony was one of the most picturesque scenes of my boyhood. The highway between Port Lavaca and San Antonio passed directly in front of our home. The crowd wore the costumes of the old country. Many of the women had very short skirts, showing their limbs two or three inches above the ankle. Some had on wooden shoes and, almost without exception, all wore broad-brimmed, low-crowned black felt hats, nothing like the hats that were worn in Texas. They also wore blue jackets of heavy woolen cloth, falling just below the waist and gathered into folds at the back with a band of the same material.* (13)

In 1866, Rev. Adolf Bakanowski, Vicar-General of the Polish Missions in Texas, settled in Panna Maria. His memoirs were published in 1913 in Poland and tell of the hardships experienced by the immigrants during the early years of the settlement. His writings also explain how the difficulties tended to strengthen the culture of the group.

"How great was their disillusion when, after a hard and dangerous journey, they discovered they had been betrayed. To turn around and go back was out of the question, as they had no money, nor were they anxious, either, to trust themselves for a second time to the mercy of the waves. They had to remain where they were, and endure every kind of misery that bore down on them. Colonists without houses, sheltering themselves under oak trees or in caves with only brush for protection, in the company of various poisonous reptiles, the prey of Texas storms, without knowledge of the language, they had to suffer much and long before they were able to achieve for themselves an endurable existence."

"That is the unpleasant side of their life. But along with this, there was, in the realm of morals, a good side. For one thing, since they did not know the language, they were forced, by the strange and barbarous customs of the southern Americans, to get along together in harmony and to achieve within their own community, Christian solidarity. This made it easier later on to establish a model parish organization. The way they suffered, the poverty, the persecution to which they were exposed by the Americans, all these contributed to making them cling to their own Polish manners and customs, and especially to the faith they had brought with them in their hearts from the old country."

"Thus they formed an entity apart. They helped each other, as they had to do so, for, except for certain necessities of life, they got no help whatsoever from the Americans. The latter, when they finally saw that the Poles were able to get along without their help, and that they were proving themselves to be in every way their equal, began to make every effort to drive them from the country, even by force of arms. The North had freed the blacks

by taking up arms. The southern separatists could not oppose the newcomers actively, by fighting them openly, but what they could do was carry on a war of passive oppression, and take vengeance on individuals. When they saw a Pole without knowledge of the language, a peasant with no education, these southerners looked upon him as they did the blacks, and felt they had the same right to deny him his human rights as they did the blacks."

"Venal and unscrupulous officials would for a price let the greatest criminal go free from imprisonment, while at the same time robbing and persecuting without mercy an honest and upright Pole. It is not to be wondered that all kinds of armed assaults upon Poles were the order of the day." (14)

Why the Poles were singled out for persecution is not clear, but the discrimination they suffered is a matter of fact. Records show they were required to pay five and ten dollars an acre for land, while adjoining tracts sold for two dollars an acre. (15) The "force of arms" that Bakanowski referred to concerned the frequent harassment of the immigrants by cowboys who rode their horses into the church and shot up the town. (16) Incidents continued until the Poles retaliated.

After Sunday morning services the Polish congregation stepped from their church to view a large group of armed horsemen, and -- nearby -- ten wagons filled with onlooking wives and daughters. Father Bakanowski met the challenge by threatening to fire upon the wagons. Caught by surprise, the aggressors quickly cleared the erstwhile battlefield. A lasting truce was achieved when soldiers from San Antonio arrived to maintain order, in 1869. (17)

In the late 1800s, South Texas was a virtually lawless frontier that attracted many renegades. The Nueces Strip -- the region between the Nueces and Rio Grande Rivers -- was being claimed by both the United States and

Mexico, but was protected by neither. Although Panna Maria was north of the Nueces River, the community was within striking distance of the Strip. Marauders could attack settlements and escape easily into the no-man's-land across the river. (For additional information, see The Mexicans.) The Polish settlement was isolated and vulnerable, the people unaccustomed to the brutal realities of frontier life in Texas.

The discrimination and violence directed against the Poles would probably have met any immigrant group that entered the region. Foreign languages and customs were automatically suspicious to many people, especially ignorant renegades. Eastern Europeans in general and the Polish in particular are still noted for their patience and politeness, traits that many Americans misinterpret as passivity and stupidity. (18)

The Catholicism of the Poles was another possible cause of discrimination. "Papists" had faced prejudice world-wide for generations; America was no exception. The language of the Church -- Latin -- was not understood by non-Catholics and the rites seemed mysterious to them. There was also the question of allegiance: many people believed that Catholics would honor their Pope before their country. The fact that the cowboys attacked the Polish settlers in their church indicates the animosity held for their religion.

As the immigrants succeeded in their farming efforts and, as Father Bakanowski wrote, showed they were able to get along without "the Americans," (19) they possibly were seen as an economic threat to area residents. Perhaps fears that the immigrants would "take over" and force other farmers out of the market also contributed to the intense reaction against their settlement.

That the Poles stayed on in the face of such odds, both natural and man-made, showed their tenacity and desperation: they could not go home. Although harassment continued for years, Panna Maria was an established farming community by 1856. As the lands around the town were taken, the settlers moved further north and, in 1875, founded Cestohowa. Another migration in 1892 established Kosciusko and the chain of communities that came to be known as the "Polish Corridor" (20) was completed.

The Poles of South Texas migrated from other areas, either in Texas or elsewhere in the United States. Virtually none came here directly from Poland; the few that did arrived after World War II.

Perhaps because of the discrimination they have almost always encountered, from the violence in Panna Maria to the ethnic slurs and jokes of recent years, the Poles seem less interested than other groups in discussing their heritage. Many may feel that their comments will be held up for ridicule. Still, they have an active heritage association -- the Polish Organization of South Texas -- and sponsor events such as Polish Week at the Corpus Christi Museum in October.

Organization member Stanley Slowick explained the attraction he feels for Polish gatherings. "I'm pretty much Americanized, but when we get together with the Polish group here in Corpus Christi, we pick up some of the older traditions. As far as the celebrations are concerned, we try to think about them in the old Polish ways and this is the thing we really enjoy because we've been away from it so long. Now that we have this group, we try to make it as Polish as possible. For instance, during the Easter holidays, we have our own special ways of preparing food. One of the things I can remember when I was growing up, for Easter you always had boiled ham, good

smoked sausage and hard boiled eggs -- and you had to have horseradish. If you had hard boiled eggs and no horseradish, that was a bad combination!"

"Bread -- I think I was grown when I first found out about white bread. White bread was a no-no in our family; we never touched the stuff. We had pumpernickle or rye. We would go down to a place (in Rochester, New York) where there was a Jewish section. They had their own bakeries and creameries there, delicatessens where you could buy herring and special cheeses, Russian rye bread and black pumpernickle. So we never fooled around with white bread."

Slowick moved to Texas in 1949 and noted differences between the Poles in the East and those in Texas. "You take some of the Polish people up around Fall City and Panna Maria. They're back about fifty years in their manner of speech, the way they do things and their thinking. You see, these people have never been exposed to any big city life; most of them are rural people. They live out on their farms in their own little community and are not exposed to too much in the way city people are."

Soon after he arrived in Corpus Christi, a friend invited Slowick to go fishing near Panna Maria. "After we had caught some fish, he said, 'Come on, let's drive around and we'll talk to the people around here. I'll take you over to see some of my friends.'"

"That was where I first noticed the difference in the spoken language. Some of the people I talked to thought I was a lawyer or a teacher because my Polish was quite different from their Polish. Their Polish was fifty or one hundred years behind time. I had a little trouble understanding them and they had a little trouble understanding me. That was where I noticed the difference."

"There was one unusual situation. There has been a lot of intermarriage between Poles and Mexicans, but I was quite flabbergasted when we pulled into a gas station and this Mexican boy came up to me and started talking to me in Polock!"

In spite of, or perhaps because of, Poland's history of foreign control, there is a great unity among Polish people. "The Poles have a very strong feeling of nationalism, I think possibly more than some other ethnic groups. It's a very fierce thing. Any time they get together, they foster this nationalism. They are very steadfast people. They stick to their own group. They stick up for their country. I think the Polish Organization of South Texas is to perpetuate the Polish way of life as much as possible. Not to supersede the American way, but to keep it all going."

"Because the Poles have been an oppressed people for centuries, I think it's built up a terrific and intense nationalism. This is what makes them stick together. You had an example of that during World War II. They went out and fought the invading army with cavalry against tanks and all sorts of sophisticated weapons. They didn't just give up, they didn't just turn around and run, they fought and they had been doing that for centuries. I think they always will because they have this intense nationalism. It's something that is instilled in you when you are a kid. I had that put into me by my dad, and I think you'll find that true of any Pole you talk to. That's what makes them stick together."

Like other heritage groups, the Polish Organization of South Texas has had problems attracting young people to its membership. "It's always difficult to get them interested in anything like this. I think some of the problem is they haven't been exposed to the Polish way of life. They've been

Americanized at an early age and they've grown up that way. It's kind of hard for them to adapt." (21)

Nation-wide, the Polish population is large and influential. In South Texas, however, it has never been sizable or even identifiable. A noticable percentage of the current population is from large cities outside of Texas. (22) Many of the local Poles return to the Polish Corridor in Central Texas to participate in ethnic festivals and celebrations and so the traditions will not be lost. The ties they maintain with individuals and organizations throughout Texas and America will insure the continuity of the Polish heritage within their own lives and homes and, by extension, in their communities.

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[2]Ibid, p. 789.

[3]Ibid, p. 789.

[4]Ibid, p. 790.

[5]Andrzei Brozek, Polish-American Studies, Vol. XXX, No. 1, 1973 Spring, "The Roots of Polish Migration to Texas," pp. 20-35.

[6]Ibid, p. 25.

[7]Ibid, pp. 16-17.

[8]Ibid, p. 30.

[9]Ibid, p. 27.

[10]Ibid, p. 32.

[11]James P. McGuire, ed., Polish Texans (San Antonio: Institute of Texan Cultures, 1979), p. 10.

[12]Stephanie Bernardo, The Ethnic Almanac (Garden City, New York: Dolphin Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981), p. 12.

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[14]Adolf Bakanowski, Polish-American Studies, Vol. XXV, No. 2. July -- December, 1968, "My Memoirs -- Texas Sojourn," pp. 112-113.

[15]James P. McGuire, ed., Polish Texans (San Antonio: Institute of Texan Cultures, 1979), p. 19.

[16]Ibid, p. 19.

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[18]Charles Keil, The Journal of Ethnic Studies, Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1979, "Class and Ethnicity in Polish-America," p. 39.

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[20]James P. McGuire, ed., Polish Texans (San Antonio: Institute of Texan Cultures, 1979), p. 28.

[21] Interview with Stanley Slowick, Education Service Center, July 15, 1981.

[22] Interview, Anonymous.

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